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LETTERS

FROM THE EAST:

WRITTEN

DURING A RECENT TOUR THROUGH

TURKEY, EGYPT, ARABIA, THE HOLY LAND, SYRIA,

AND GREECE.

BY JOHN CARNE, ESQ.

OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

SECOND EDITION.

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Thomas Slingsby Tanner.

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LETTERS

FROM

THE EAST.

LETTER I.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

We arrived at Pera near Constantinople, after a very good passage of eighteen days from Marseilles, without much incident. The worst part of it was a calm of four days, that came on as we lost sight of Sardinia: during which the utter want of interest and variety brought a most wearying vacuity upon the mind, as we sat upon the deck, sick, gazing only on the sea and sky, and the waste of waters heaving around.

On the fifth day a beautiful breeze sprang up, and sickness and weariness fled away. The Morea came in sight, and we saw a sunset equal to some I have seen in England. One lovely evening, in particular, I well remember. The island of Zea was on one side, and a very pretty Greek town of white houses with flat roofs on its declivity, and a church at the bottom, just like one of our own village churches: the high and romantic land of Greece, very barren, was on the other side, and the sun sank gradually over the scene with indescribable splendour. But the twilight here is much shorter than with us; nor do the hues of sunset, though more delicate and soft, linger so long in the sky. The range of Grecian country, terminating in the capes Colonna and Negropont, was extremely lofty, and the hills finely wooded; and far in the back-ground were mountains covered with snow. The islands of Mitylene, Ipsara, and at last Tenedos, came in sight, with the land of Troy. But the land of the East, to which we were fast approaching, now became the great object of interest; and the entrance of the Dardanelles at last opened, a vessel

or two preceded us; when a gun from the fort told us that all was not peace. We were ordered, from a Turkish frigate, into a position near the shore. The captain concealed his money. Two boats boarded us on both sides with soldiers and several officers; but they only came to know if we had any design to assist the Greeks with stores or ammunition, and they at last gave us permission to depart.

After some hours' stay we proceeded up the Dardanelles, Europe on one side and Asia on the other, and Turkey soon opened on us with its loveliest scenery. I do not know if I can convey a proper idea of it,—it is so different from that of Europe. What gives a peculiar beauty to the Turkish towns and villages, is their being so embosomed in trees. You always see these of the liveliest verdure, hanging over and shading the greatest part of the houses. The habitations are rather low, and built generally of wood, with gently sloping roofs; they are either of a red, white, or lead colour, with windows of framework of wood. The neat white minaret of the mosque rises eminent

amidst every village. The country was rich in many parts with corn, which had been already cut; and a cool kiosque was seen, shaded with its luxuriance of wood. But all this only whetted my impatience to behold Stamboul, as the Turks call it; and night came down again to augment it. For the last few days the sky had become more beautiful, of a most delicate blue, bounded near the horizon by a ridge of white clouds; and the last day of our voyage was particularly fine, when a gentle breeze brought us towards the capital of the East. The first view rather disappoints you; the surrounding shores are not striking, and you are inclined to ask, "where is the magnificence of Constantinople?" But when you enter the canal, and turn the point where the seraglio stands, and the site of the city, being built on declivities, rises higher, so that houses appear to range on houses—and Pera and Galata, with the immense dark grove of cypress on the place of graves that crowns the hill, open to your view—you are struck with admiration. The houses of wood, of which the city is chiefly built, have indeed nothing grand

in their appearance; three-fourths of the fronts are taken up with windows. But it is the novel and beautiful blending of trees and verdure with every part; the innumerable minarets, some with gilded tops that glitter in the sun; and the superior mosques, of a nobler appearance, and towering above all other buildings—which impress the mind of a stranger with feelings unknown at the sight of any other European city.

Our vessel being bound ~~from~~ for Odessa, proceeded up the river to the village of Buyukderé, a few miles distant, celebrated for its beauty. This afforded an excellent opportunity to view the scenery; and few who have once done this can ever forget it. Each side of the river—a noble stream, of a mile, or sometimes half that in width—was thickly covered with habitations. In one part was a mosque of the purest white marble, most richly ornamented and gilded, and the dark cypress around it; on the left, a summer seraglio of the Sultan, with its small pleasure-ground, stretched along the shore. The hills on the European side, descending nearly close to the river, and prettily wooded, yet so

small that they looked in miniature; and the little Turkish houses, standing in the river, or hanging in parapets over it, or thrown back in a retiring wood,—put one in mind of what one has imagined of Chinese scenery and dwellings. My view often wandered with delight over the Asiatic side, as the scene of future pleasures. "At last," I said to myself, "my long-cherished hopes are accomplished; it is all Oriental that I see: but my expectations are surpassed."

After casting anchor at Buyukderé, the captain procured a boat to carry us back to Constantinople. One Turkish rower only had to pull against a strong wind for some miles; it was most laborious work for him, though well paid: it was the fast of Ramadan, and the poor fellow pointed to his stomach very expressively, to signify he had eaten nothing all day. It was evening as we entered the basin of Constantinople, and it was like a scene of enchantment. The seraglio, in part a range of white buildings, beautifully figured in front, with hanging roofs of a lead colour, but without any magnificence of architecture, stood close to

the water's edge; behind, was a rich and moveless mass of cypress, varied by the vast domains of the palace, which occasionally glittered through or rose over it. On the left was Scutari, one of the suburbs on the Asiatic side, with its white mosques; and, as we drew nearer the landing place, large boats, with Turks of all ranks and dresses, passed rapidly by.

We were not aware of the tumults and massacres of which Constantinople had been the scene. It was not safe for an European to pass through Pera and Galata without a Janizary. On landing at the latter suburb, we entered a coffee-house: but the Turks, with impressive gestures, warned us away. Not only the soldiers, but all the populace, bore arms: the very boys had their pistols and ataghan, and had learned to dip their hands in blood. Almost every day some dreadful atrocity was acted. There was no mercy for the Greek, wherever discovered: no home could shelter him, save the palaces of the ambassadors. The windows of the lofty apartment where we lodged looked down on a cemetery, with its

cypress-grove. As soon as evening set in, the firing of musquets and pistols commenced around it, and was kept up at intervals through the night: this rendered it very unsafe to walk there after sunset. Of the Greek boyars, or noblemen, scarcely one now remains. Those who were not slain in the tumults have fled from their homes, and left their families and possessions at the mercy of the Turks. The village of Therapia on the Bosphorus was celebrated alike for the beauty of its women and the uncommon loveliness of its situation. It was a luxury to a stranger in the cool of evening to see the Greek ladies and princesses walking there, with their raven hair scarcely confined, and the rich veil turned aside; their classic features and fine forms harmonizing well with the exquisite scenery around. But now every path is silent there, and their palaces are deserted.

As I sat one afternoon beneath the portico of the Palace of the Janizaries in Constantinople, two Greeks, of a superior class, were brought in under a guard. It was impossible not to be

moved at such a scene. They were both elderly men; and as they walked with a firm step, their looks were placid and resigned. Their fate was inevitable; their retreat had been discovered, and they were torn from their families to die. Indeed it was singular to observe the resignation, approaching to apathy, with which the Greeks in general met their fate. One unfortunate man had made his escape; but so strong was his desire after a few weeks to see his family again, that he ventured back. The very evening of his return he was discovered in Galata, and dragged forth. The Greek knelt down, folded his arms on his breast tranquilly, without any change of feature, and was instantly slain. I passed by the body of this man twice afterwards: the Turks, as was their frequent practice after beheading, had fixed the head between the knees in an upright position, so that its ghastly aspect was sure to meet the eye of the passenger. The Musulmen certainly excel all other people in their dexterity in taking off the head at one blow. Afterwards, at Smyrna, I went early one morning to the execution of

twenty-three Greeks, who were put to death in this way with little pain. But the scene was closed before I arrived at the spot, where the bodies were then lying in a heap. It was truly shocking to see how cheap human life was held. The women were better off in this respect: but woe to those who had any beauty! they always found their way to the harems of the Turks, to become their slaves and mistresses, while the plain ones were cared nothing about. A young and very lovely Greek was offered for sale by an Armenian merchant at Constantinople for twenty thousand piastres, (about six hundred pounds). One of the pashas who had owed the merchant that sum, had sent him this lady, who had become his captive, as payment, with directions that he must sell her for the full amount. The sex were, indeed, sadly degraded at this period. At the storming of Hivaly, a Greek town on the coast of Asia Minor, the Turks having put all the men to the sword, and secured the few beauties for their seraglios, sold the rest of the women for fifty piastres, or thirty shillings, a-piece. In *several of the warehouses* of the

English merchants at Smyrna, the ladies were crowded together, of all kinds, ranks, ages, and charms, too happy to escape the hands of the true believers, never daring to quit their retreat, and supplied with food by the generosity of their protectors.—But to return to Stamboul. How entire a change from the freedom and gaiety of France, which we had so lately left! The women you meet have a most repulsive appearance: a huge cloak hangs down to their feet, and a thick white veil covers the upper part of the face;—the pallid hue of the small part exposed, with the dark eyes peering earnestly over the veil, give them just the appearance of corpses.

The various costumes of the Turks have much interest for a stranger. They are certainly, in personal appearance, the finest people in Europe, and their figures are much set off by their magnificent dress. During the feast of Beiram, when every man, from the prince to the peasant, puts on his best apparel, nothing could be more striking than the infinite variety and splendour of their dresses. The beauty of the

Turks is peculiar; the features have a general bluntness, without "points or angles." The thick and heavy eyebrow covers a full, round, and dark eye; the nose straight, and the chin round, with a very handsome mouth. They walk extremely erect; and their large limbs, their slow pace, and flowing garments, give them a very majestic air. They will sit on benches spread with soft carpets, in the open air, a great part of the day; and you see some of them reclining so movelessly, with their head and noble white beard resting on their bosom, and clothed in a light pink or white drapery, that they bring to mind the scene of the ancient Roman senators, when the Goths first rushed into the Forum, and took their tranquil forms for statues. But nothing can exceed their indolence: they hold a string of beads in their hands of different colours, to play with like children, from mere inanity of thought, during the intervals of smoking.

From the extreme tranquillity and regularity of their lives, and their freedom from strong passions, derangement is a very rare circum-

stance with this people. We one day visited the house for lunatics, the only one in the city. It possessed a spacious court, with a fountain and trees in the middle; and the cells were ranged around. The persons confined were very few; and the madness of each was quiet and meditative, if such an expression is allowable. There was no violence or strong emotion of any kind manifested. One old man was happy to play his guitar and sing to any visitor.

Love can have little power on the mind with a people among whom the free association of the sexes, or the knowledge of each other, is forbid by custom. For ambition, or the restless desire to rise in the world, whether to riches or fame, the Turk certainly cares less than any other being. The pride of family, or the trouble of sustaining it, affects him little, there being no orders of nobility amongst them. Give him his Arab horses, his splendid arms, his pipe and coffee, his seat in the shade,—and the Turk is in general contented with the state which Alla has assigned him. The pleasures

of the table have few charms for him, for no other nation can equal his temperance at table. But his idol, his ruling passion, is beauty; for this he will pay any price. He will procure this from every nation: when the first wife of his fancy begins to lose the freshness of her charms, he will seek another more seductive; no matter whether Persian, Circassian, Greek, or Armenian. How admirably the prophet has adapted his paradise to the passions of his countrymen! The banks of roses on which the true believer sinks down, the palm, the orange, and the trees of perfume waving their eternal shadows over him, the fountains which gush away with a sound as of melody—all would be tame and unavailing, but for the maids of immortal beauty, who await him there.

The feast of Beiram having commenced, we went to see the celebrated game of the jerrid, or hurling the blunt javelin. We formed a party of six gentlemen, and were attended by three Janizaries. The coffee-houses in the suburbs of the city are often beautifully situated and shaded: near one of these were a number of little cars, very

gaudily painted and canopied, with carpets in them; they were drawn by the hand, by means of a long pole affixed, and in them the Turk reclined at his ease. The weather was very hot; our path was through the immense burial-ground on the summit of the hill, covered with its dark mass of noble cypress-trees. The tomb-stones were narrow, four or five feet high, with a turban of stone carved on the top of each, and adorned with various inscriptions, many of which, as well as the monument, were richly gilded.

You could not help contrasting this Eastern cemetery with that most interesting one at Paris, of Père La Chaise. There all was taste, elegance, and tenderness: the beds of flowers and garlands that adorned the neat mausoleums of white marble, on which the sun shone —or the darker monuments which stood apart, shrouded by the cypress—all kept so clean and sacred, that a survivor might delight to retire there to mourn. Here there was a deep and impenetrable gloom, and a stillness well suited to it. You saw only here and there a female

figure sitting on the earth, and mourning at the tomb of her husband or son: but her grief had no voice; and her face then partly unshrouded, with its pallid hue, looked as little enchanting as death itself.

On emerging from this vast cemetery, we descended the hill, and entered a small wood, where groups of Turks were seated in the shade, or beneath awnings, smoking and conversing, or amused with a buffoon. The field wherein the game was to be played presented a scene truly Oriental. It formed a kind of amphitheatre, the steep declivity of which was covered with innumerable spectators, who sat in rows on the ground, their turbaned heads, of all the colours of the rainbow, rising in ridges one over the other to the summit. Above these, on the brow of the hill, were pitched a number of tents; and beside them stood several open carriages, filled with Turkish ladies, veiled. The Sultan was in a kiosque that overlooked the field, before which were ranged his guards, uncommonly fine men, all in white dresses. A number of beautiful Arabian cour-

sers, richly caparisoned and held by grooms, stood around, and gave a variety to the scene. In a small valley below were the combatants with the jerrid. The wild Turkish music struck up, and the game was warmly engaged in. The dexterity of the players was admirable; starting at full speed in all directions, they threw the jerrid with infinite skill, and warded off their antagonist's, or caught it as it flew.

Though there are no carriages here, yet the Turkish boats, in which you are borne rapidly to any part of the shores of the Bosphorus, are an exceeding luxury. They are very light, and finely carved within, and often gilded. You are pestered, the moment you arrive at the water's edge, with innumerable applications. The boatmen are admirable rowers: so many of them have the privilege of being the prophet's cousins, that the green turban is quite common among them. We embarked one fine morning to visit the islands of Chalcé, Prinkipo, and others, seven miles from the city. The scenery they contain is really exquisite.

There is a convent in each; a recluse could never wish for a lovelier retirement. A party of the natives were seated in the shade of a large tree, smoking and sipping coffee. It would be worth while to know how far a Turk is sensible of the picturesque; he certainly has the range of the finest parts of the world. But it is quite amusing sometimes to see him seated beneath the portico of a coffee-house, that overlooks scenes which have no equal: with his little cup of coffee or sherbet, which he sips at intervals, musing between, or eating sweetmeats with childish fondness; while his deep external solemnity, his formidable weapons and lofty demeanour, afford a singular contrast.

On landing at Prinkipo, we were surrounded by a number of unfortunate Greeks, who were truly objects of sympathy and pity. They had not taken any part in the revolution; but, being not wholly free from suspicion, were sent here by the Turkish government to await their doom. What this would be they knew not: they put the most eager questions to us: the deep dejection of their countenances, for most

of them looked pale and wretched, showed how bitter was the state of suspense in which they were held; and it was not in our power to give them any consolation.

We set out very early one morning, a party of six, to make the tour of the walls of Constantinople. It was a very sultry and cloudless day; but any fatigue would have been repaid by such a promenade. The country in the immediate neighbourhood it is vain to attempt to describe. These ancient walls have a most noble and venerable appearance; they are about forty feet high in many parts, with their towers quite shrouded with ivy. But it was in vain we attempted to discover the place of the breach by which the Turks entered. The whole circuit of the walls is eighteen miles; but the line towards the sea is not so lofty as the rest. About a mile off, on the plain, is the lofty mound, where Mahmoud planted his standard, and first beheld the city; and, transported with its beauty, swore by the prophet never to stir thence till it was his own. It is directly opposite the gate of Tophcani, whence

the unfortunate Constantine made his last sally, and, being mortally wounded, was borne to a shaded spot near by, where he expired. There was an Armenian coffee-house at this place, outside the wall: we entered it, and soon felt the reality of Oriental luxury. When exhausted by heat and fatigue, to recline on soft cushions by the side of a fountain, to drink Arabian coffee or sherbet, and take the Argillée, where the smoke, after passing through a vase of water, comes cooled through a soft and curling tube to the mouth—all this acts on the senses with a powerful charm.

We afterwards came to the ruins of a small Greek church, lately destroyed, which had been held in peculiar veneration, on account of some sacred fish preserved there in a pool with infinite care. At the storming of the city by Mahmoud, the wall near which this church stood was considered impregnable. One of the Greek priests was frying some fish, secure in his situation. On a messenger entering with the news that the Turks were forcing their way in, "I would as soon believe," exclaimed the priest, "that

these fish would leap out of the pan, and swim about the room, as such an impossible event." Strange to say, the thing actually happened: and these sacred fish were preserved till lately inviolable, but they too have fallen, with their masters, before the sacrilegious Turks. While we were there, two poor Greeks drew nigh, with marks of the deepest reverence, and one of them shed tears at sight of the ruins. We then took a boat, and landed not far from the Atmeidan, or chief square of the city: here stands the splendid mosque of Sultan Mahmoud, but no European, at that time, was allowed to enter the mosques, and we could only gaze on the outside of Saint Sophia. On passing by one of the gates of the seraglio, it stood open and afforded a glimpse of the rich gardens within: but this was forbidden ground. At the foot of the gate lay a number of heads of the wretched Greeks, and the boys were tumbling them about like footballs. Near this was a large fountain of a strikingly rich and elegant appearance, carved and gilded on the four sides, with several streams of water gush-

ing out. The care shown by this people to provide the luxury of water for the traveller cannot be too highly praised, and prevails all over the East. At intervals along the roads and within the city are erected neat stone fountains, placed, if possible, in the shade of trees: with a tin vessel suspended by a chain, to drink out of. We entered next the great bazaar, called the Bezestein. The bazaars are places of high interest to lounge in. Each trade has its own street and department. The circular roof, by which also the light enters, screens them from the heat. It is a great treat to sit beside one of the merchants on his elevated seat, and observe the variety of people of various ranks and costumes who pass before you. The Persian, the Armenian, the Nubian, and the Tartar merchants, arrived with caravans from the most distant parts of Asia: pilgrims from Mecca, with their green turbans, and toil-worn yet haughty features—for each devotee holds his head higher after that enterprise: Dervishes, who traverse all parts of the empire, some half naked, others decked in vari-

ous ornaments. The Turkish merchant comes here at an early hour, mounts into his little shop, sits in his soft slippers, with his pipe in his hand, and is supplied with coffee at intervals from the seller close by: he never asks for custom, but waits tranquilly till applied to. Thus he remains till sunset.

We spent a few days very delightfully at Therapia, at the house of Mr. L.; where a very singular adventure befel us. After sunset we set out on a long walk with Mr. and Mrs. L. and ascended the hill above the village. After enjoying a good while the wide and exquisite scenery which the path commanded—the whole channel of the Bosphorus, the Black Sea, and the Seven-hilled city in the distance—we proposed to return direct home; but the lady preferred descending to the water-side, and to return by a more agreeable and circuitous path. The tents of the Turkish soldiers, wild and irregular troops, lately arrived from Asia Minor, were scattered on the declivities around; and it was certainly not prudent to be walking at so late an hour, and without a guard. We

had nearly gained the foot of the hill when we were challenged by a sentinel from a bank above; several others soon came up, and arrested our progress. They conducted us to the tent of their chief, in the middle of which he was reclining on a carpet; but the entire ignorance of each other's language rendered the interview useless. The scene was very striking. The group of tents stood on a lofty bank at the water's edge, and the watch-fires at the entrance of each threw a vivid glare around: the whole was overspread by a noble group of trees, through the massive foliage of which the moonlight scarcely penetrated. We were then ordered to a spot outside the tent, where the ropes crossing formed a sort of barrier. They most probably took us for Greeks; for soon after leaving Therapia a party of soldiers came there in search of two Greek gentlemen and a lady: and our companion's dress, in a light blue turban and black veil, favoured this idea. The chief at last allowed us to enter his tent, where he again endeavoured to examine us. He was a bold-looking man, with a handsome black beard

and very graceful gesture. His tent was dimly lighted by a large lamp, made of fine oiled cotton; and many of his soldiers, wild-looking fellows, and variously armed, formed a circle round. At last they brought coffee and pipes, the pledges of peace, helping the lady last, (as an inferior being in their eyes,) who throughout had shown great coolness and presence of mind. We had no prospect now but of spending the night here; and the idea was any thing but pleasant. Mr. L. at last thought of sending a message to Gèorgi, a French servant in Therapia, who spoke Turkish. The chief in the mean time grew more friendly; he drew from beneath his pillow his beautiful Damascus sabre, two-edged for about half the blade's length, and inscribed with characters from the Koran. After a long delay Georgi at last arrived, and soon explained who we were; but the bey insisted on sending us under a guard before the Pacha, who with his army was encamped in the beautiful valley of Buyukderé, about two miles distant. Four soldiers attended us; and as we drew near the camp, it presented a scene truly interesting.

The white tents in one part were ranged close to the edge of an inlet of the Bosphorus; and the light of their watch-fires, spread over the waters, mingled with the most soft and cloudless moonlight. As we advanced into the wood, large groups of soldiers were seated smoking beneath the trees, and almost shrouded by their deep shade. Farther on in the valley, this camp of seven thousand troops was lighted by numerous lines of fires; or the blaze of the pine-torch suspended from the trees. We reached at last the tent of the Pacha, who was absent from the camp: but his chief officer, the Kiaia Bey, was there, with two more officers of rank. The tent was lined with crimson silk, and floored with a rich Persian carpet. The chief behaved in a very polite manner; apologized for his people having arrested us; but advised us never to walk out late again without a guard, in such disturbed times, as he could not be answerable for the behaviour of the irregular troops. Delicious Arabian coffee was then introduced in small china cups, placed in another cup of chased silver, according to the eastern custom.

The spectacle around was truly barbaric; some large pine torches, hung from the trees, were fiercely burning before the tent, and their light was thrown over the variously-coloured and splendid dresses of a number of soldiers ranged around; while at a short distance, amongst the trees, the wild yet sweet Turkish music was played, accompanied with singing. The general ordered a guard of six soldiers to accompany us back to Therapia, where we arrived at a late hour.

The mosque of the whirling Dervishes afforded a singular exhibition during the feast of Beiram. Taking off our shoes at the entrance, we mingled among the assemblage of Turks that was seated on the floor. There was a great deal of simplicity and elegance in the building: a large circular space in the middle was inclosed by a railing, within which were near twenty dervishes. Above, was a gallery with a front of gilt lattice-work, which held a great number of spectators as well as the musicians. The devotions, if so they may be called, began with the chanting some parts of the Koran, by a der-

vise in the gallery, whose voice gradually became louder, and the dervishes below began to walk round in a circle, slowly, with their arms folded. At last the music struck up a lively strain; and one of them, advancing into the middle of the circle, began to spin round like a top. They all threw off the outer garment, and in their white vest set to spinning, with their arms extended in a line with the top of their heads, and their eyes closed. It is really incredible how they could endure such an incessant motion for such a length of time, it being continued for more than an hour, with two or three intervals of rest of a few minutes each. Though so many in a small space, and the vest of each flung out like a parachute, they did not come in contact with each other.

The same day we had the pleasure of seeing the Sultan go in procession to the mosque. He landed from his splendid barge at the entrance of the fort, and advanced slowly on a most beautiful charger, surrounded by his guards and chief officers on foot. First came the Janizaries in red; then the soldiers, who wore mag-

nificent plumes of white feathers, in the form of a crescent, fixed on their gilded helmets: these carried battle-axes richly adorned. Immediately around the Sultan were his body-guards, uncommonly fine men, their turban and whole dress of the purest white. He himself is a very handsome man, with a mild and melancholy aspect, about forty years of age.

LETTER II.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

We took boat one afternoon, with two English gentlemen, for Scutari, to see the howling Dervishes. The mosque was very plain. Having taken our seats in the gallery, we waited for some time, while the dervishes were engaged in drinking, as our guard, a captain of the Janizaries, informed us, to excite themselves to go through the strange exhibition that followed. A young man of the order then mounted on a flight of steps without the door, and summoned, in a very loud and mournful voice, for nearly half an hour, the faithful to attend. The dervishes all entered, and, ranged in a long line, began to rock their bodies to and fro in simultaneous movement. But this motion soon be-

came more rapid, and Alla and Mohammed, at first pronounced in a low and sad tone, burst from their lips with violence. They then all threw off their outer garments, sprang from the ground, and threw their arms furiously about. As their imaginations became more heated, some stripped themselves nearly naked, others foamed at the mouth; one or two old men, exhausted, sank on the ground, and the cries of God and the Prophet might be heard afar off. It was a singular spectacle of enthusiasm and hypocrisy combined; but what ensued was more disgusting, for they took red-hot irons and applied them to their legs and feet, and other parts of their bodies, still howling out amidst their pain the name of the Eternal, in whose honour, they would have their credulous assembly believe, they suffered all this. A great part of the dervishes are notorious libertines and profligates, as the better informed Turks are often heard to call them. They consist of various orders; some live in monasteries, others lead a wandering life through different parts of the empire, chiefly subsisting on the hospitality

of the faithful. In the island of Cyprus I met with a young dervise of this kind; his features were fair and effeminate, and his long hair fell in ringlets on his neck and bosom; on the latter he wore several pieces of stained glass, fancifully disposed; his appearance betokened any thing but devotion. Others are to be seen roving about with thick dishevelled hair, wild looks, and half naked; these profess poverty and self-denial, and are held most in reverence by the people. Many of these men, however, are sincere teachers and examples of their religion, and lead the life of pilgrims, or fix on some secluded spot, where they live abstemiously, and repay with their counsels the simple presents of the people. The most eminent of them are termed Santons, and have handsome monuments built on their graves in the shade of trees, which are ever after regarded with peculiar veneration.

The fast of Ramadan ended a few days ago. As rigidly kept as that of the Jews:—the Turk finds it severe enough to remain from one sunset to the next without a morsel; then coffee and his pipe are indeed his solace, for these are

permitted. With what tumultuous joy did the believers deport themselves in a coffee-house not far from the palace of the English ambassador! They danced wildly in groups to the sound of the guitar and tambour, embraced one another as they talked of the night near at hand, when the first appearance of the new moon should announce that Ramadan was over, and Beiram was begun. It came at last; on that night every minaret of the grand mosques was illumined from top to bottom with innumerable rows of lamps. You could distinguish those of Achmed, Suleimanieh, and St. Sophia; it was a peculiar and splendid sight; and the vast city and its people seemed to be hushed in the stillness of midnight, waiting for the signal of festivity. The Imauns from the tops of the highest minarets eagerly bent their looks to catch the first glimpse of the new moon; the moment it was perceived, loud and joyful shouts, which spread instantly all over the city, announced that the hour of indulgence was come, and full compensation for all their denials. It was really pleasing to observe, the next day, the

looks of kindness and almost fraternal feeling which they cast on each other. The poor man is often seen at this period to take the hand, and kiss the cheek of the rich and haughty, who returns the salutation as to his equal, a brother in the glorious faith of their Prophet, a co-heir to the privileges of his Paradise. Delight was pictured in every countenance; every one put on his finest apparel, and the sound of music was heard on every side, mingled with songs in honour of their religion. We are too apt to divest the Turks of domestic virtues, yet one cannot but be struck with their extreme fondness for their children; beautiful beings they often are, beyond those of any other country. In Damascus, I have many times stopped in the streets to gaze at children of six or eight years of age, whose extreme loveliness it was impossible not to admire;—and afterwards in Tripolitza, I cannot forget how the love of a Turkish lady to her two youngest children risked the murder of herself, her son and daughter, and her most intimate friend.

The population of Constantinople has been much overrated: according to General Sebas-

tiani's calculation, while he was ambassador, it does not exceed four hundred thousand; and the suburbs of Pera, Galata, Scutari, &c. with the line of villages along the shores of the Bosphorus, contain eight hundred thousand more. A considerable part of the ground the city covers is taken up with gardens. The areas of the mosques are generally planted with trees, and a fountain, sometimes richly ornamented, stands at the entrance; for a Turk seldom enters without first washing his feet; and, laying aside his shoes, he treads in his soft slippers. The solemnity of this people at their devotions is very striking; whether in the mosque or in the open air, they appear entirely abstracted from all around; and you would think, from the expression of their features, that the spirit and the senses were alike devoted to this sacred duty; they are generally silent, save that the sound of Alla, pronounced in a low and humble tone, is often heard. The mosques are in general unadorned, and the architecture quite simple; the name of God and passages from the Koran are inscribed in gold letters on the walls. A lofty corridor

goes all round the interior of the building: the circular space in the middle, where the pulpit of the Imaun stands, is lighted by a dome at the top. The assembly range themselves beneath the corridor on mats and carpets; the greater part of the time is occupied in prayer.

The habits of an Oriental are very simple; the absence of every kind of public amusement and dissipation, with his rigid adherence to all the usages of his fathers, makes one day the picture of every other. A Turk of good condition rises with the sun; and as he sleeps on soft cushions, divesting himself but of a small part of his dress, it costs him little trouble at the toilet. He offers up his prayer, and then breakfasts on a cup of coffee, some sweetmeats, and the luxury of his pipe. Perhaps he will read the Koran, or the glowing poetry of Hafiz and Sadi; for a knowledge of the Persian is the frequent accomplishment of the upper ranks of both sexes. He then orders his Arab horse, and rides for two or three hours, or exercises with the jerrid, and afterwards dines about mid-day on a highly seasoned pilaw. In the afternoon, the coffee-houses,

whither the Eastern story-tellers resort, are favourite places of entertainment; or seated in his cool kiosk, on the banks of the Bosphorus, he yields to his useless but delightful habit of musing. But the decline of day brings the Turk's highest joys: he then dines on a variety of seasoned dishes, drinks his iced sherbet, enjoys probably a party of his friends, and afterwards visits the harem, where his beloved children are brought him; and his wife or wives, if he has more than one, with the attendants and slaves, exert all their powers of fascination for their lord. The Nubian brings him the richest perfumes; the Circassian, excelling in her loveliness, presents the spiced coffee and the rare confection made by her own hands, and tunes her guitar or lute, the sounds of which are mingled with the murmurs of the fountain on the marble pavement beneath.

The utter desolation of the unhappy Greeks forces itself on one's notice every day. The spacious quarter of the Fanal, entirely inhabited by them, is now nearly deserted. The animating spectacle which the Bosphorus often

presented at evening, of their pleasure-boats filled with Greek beauty and gaiety, has quite disappeared. Two fine palaces, which stood at the water's edge, were inhabited by two brothers, who held financial situations under the government. Being suspected, their heads were cut off on the same day; and their palaces as we sailed by them, were forsaken. The sweet shaded scenes around the hamlets and cottages on the shore, where this once happy people delighted to dance in groups to the mandoline, and sing the songs of their native land, are now mute. At times, in walking along the Bosphorus, you may meet some wretched Greek flying from his pursuers, or see some murdered body floating near the shore. I mingled one day in a group of the lowest Turks, who were gazing on the corpse of one of their victims with an appearance of great satisfaction. One of them took hold of the body with a hook to throw it into the sea; but another wretch instantly stepped forwards and stripped it first of all its clothing, when it was cast naked into the water. On visiting a fine khan, near the

Fanal, which was frequented by the rich Greek merchants, not a being was to be seen save two Persian merchants, seated smoking in the open area, with pale and still features, and their long beards dyed black. Much of the effects of the captive or slain proprietors still remained in the apartments.

What tales of blood might be told of this war of extermination! Just before our landing at the town of the Dardanelles, a large village on the opposite shore was attacked at night by a body of Turkish soldiers, and men, women, and children put to the sword, to the amount of several hundreds.

In the cruel evacuation of Parga, when its poor people knew not where to find an asylum, and each family had a distress all its own, a father and mother—I knew the circumstance well—offered an English officer their only and beautiful daughter. "Take her, signior," they said, "from the misery around, save her from Ali Pacha, treat her always with kindness, and she shall live with you." The young Greek still resides with him, but her parents most

probably perished. Here, separations like this might be said to be mild, compared to some scenes, where the parents were butchered before the eyes of their children, who were borne away for the pleasures of the captor.

At Smyrna, after the first massacre in the streets, the Greeks shut themselves in their houses, but several times they made attempts to escape in boats. Having watched that the shore was clear of the enemy, they hurried on board with their families, to gain some neutral vessel in the harbour. The Turkish soldiers quickly gathered on the beach, and kept up a fire of musquetry on them. It was sad to hear the cries from the boats, and see the poor fugitives dropping as the bullets struck them.

After I left Smyrna, a singular circumstance occurred to an intimate friend and fellow-traveller, who chanced to spend a short time there. He was sitting in his apartment in the hotel one day, when a young and respectable Greek woman entered, and threw herself at his feet, weeping bitterly. She implored him to save her life, and procure her escape. Her

friends had been sacrificed, and there was no one she could trust in; and the dread of being every moment discovered by the Turks was insupportable. There was no listening to this in vain. He generously sought for her an asylum under English protection, and in a few days procured her a passage in a vessel sailing for Greece, where she was sure to find friends; and presented her with a supply of money.

Among the pleasant rides around the city is that to the Aqueducts of Justinian, and the forest of Belgrade, about fourteen miles off. Having procured horses, we left Pera early, attended by Mustapha, an honest janizary, well known to every traveller, and accustomed to go remote journeys through the empire. At a few miles' distance is the Palace of the Sweet Waters, a favourite summer residence of the Sultan. Proceeding through a pleasing country, we reached the lofty Aqueduct of Justinian, and soon after that of Bourgas. The small lakes in the heart of the forest, their lofty banks darkly covered to the water's edge, afford some scenes of peculiar beauty. We

halted at a village inhabited by a few Greeks, and entered a poor coffee-house to get some refreshment. They soon produced a dish of mutton and some fruit; and, what was more acceptable, some very good white wine. In the midst of the meal some Turkish cavalry approached, amusing themselves with throwing the jerrid at each other. The affrighted Greeks instantly hid the wine, and brought in its place a vessel of water. We wished the Turks at Mecca for spoiling our dinner: they entered, and made some very pointed inquiries; but Mustapha soon satisfied them, and, after demanding some refreshment, they departed. When the heat had abated, we directed our course towards Buyukderé: the prospect from the hills, of that village and its valley, with the Turkish camp still pitched in it, the Black Sea beyond, and the river beneath, flowing between the shores of Europe and Asia, was noble in the extreme. It being evening, we turned down to Therapia; and being kindly pressed by Mr. L. to spend a day or two with him again, sent the janizary with the horses back to the

city. The next day being Sunday, the garden of the French ambassador's palace, with its long rows of trees on the eminences, afforded a cool and retired promenade. Mr. M. a merchant, who lived close by, dined with us: we visited his garden in the evening, and taking seats on the terrace just over the water, had pipes brought. He was an elderly man, and a bachelor, and had left Scotland long ago. He talked of his native land with deep pleasure, and of the days of his youth. Singular, as the sun was going down on the exquisite scenery of the Bosphorus, stretched like fairy-land around us, to think and to talk so of the scenes of "lang syne," and all their dear associations! A cup of the whisky, and a song of the Highlands, with a sight of the kilt, or his "ain dear lassie," would have been more dear to him than the Arabian coffee we were sipping, the evening call to prayers from the mosque, or the shrouded and still forms of the women stealing along.

The condition of the women in Turkey has little resemblance to slavery, and the pity given to it by Europeans has its source more in ima-

gination than reality. From their naturally retired and indolent habits, they care less about exercise in the open air than ourselves. They are very fond of the bath, where large parties of them frequently meet and spend the greater part of the day, displaying their rich dresses to each other, conversing, and taking refreshments. From this practice, and the little exposure to the sun, the Turkish ladies have often an exquisite delicacy of complexion. They often sail in their pleasure-boats to various parts of the Bosphorus, or walk veiled to the favourite promenades near the cemetery, or in the gardens of Dolma Batcke, with their attendants; and they sometimes walk disguised through the streets of the city, without any observation. The government of an English wife over her own household does not equal that of the Turkish, which is absolute, the husband scarcely ever interfering in the domestic arrangements; and in case of a divorce her portion is always given up.

The practice of eating opium does not appear to be so general with the Turks as is commonly

believed. But there is a set of people at Constantinople devoted to this drug; and the Theriakis, as they are called, have that hollow and livid aspect, the fixed dulness of the eye at one time, or the unnatural brightness at another, which tell too plainly of this destructive habit. They seldom live beyond thirty; lose all appetite for food; and as their strength wastes, the craving for the vivid excitement of opium increases. It is useless to warn a Theriakee that he is hurrying to the grave. He comes in the morning to a large coffee-house, a well-known resort for this purpose, close to the superb mosque of Suleimanieh. Having swallowed his pill, he seats himself in the portico in front, which is shaded by trees. He has no wish to change his position, for motion would disturb his happiness, which he will tell you is indescribable. Then the most wild and blissful reveries come crowding on him. His gaze fixed on the river beneath, covered with the sails of every nation; or on the majestic shores of Asia opposite, or vacantly raised where the gilded minarets of Suleimanieh ascend on high:—if external objects heighten,

as is allowed, the illusions of opium, the Turk is privileged. There, till the sun sets on the scene, the fancy of the Theriakee revels in love, in splendour, or pride. He sees the beauties of Circassia striving whose charms shall most delight him; the Ottoman fleet sails beneath his flag as the Capitan Pacha: or seated in the divan, turbaned heads are bowed before him, and voices hail the favoured of Alla and the Sultan. But evening comes, and he awakes to a sense of wretchedness and helplessness, to a gnawing hunger which is an effect of his vice; and hurries home, to suffer till the morning sun calls him to his paradise again.

In this city you cannot proceed far without remarking the great number of coffee-houses and sweetmeat-shops. The former are attended from sun-rise till night. Each person brings his small tobacco-bag in his pocket, which he is very ready to offer to a stranger who is unprovided. Whatever residence a traveller enters, from that of the prince to that of the peasant, the universal compliment is the pipe and coffee; the latter drunk without milk, and the former of a very fine and

mild quality. The janizary, a tall, fierce-looking fellow, who attended me through the streets as a guard, and would talk very coolly by the way of the different Greeks he had murdered, used to amuse me at seeing him stop at a sweet-meat shop, and purchase what would please a child in England, and devour it with as much fondness.

The situation of the English merchants settled here, is not an enviable one. Reduced to their own contracted circle, and that destitute, with one or two exceptions, of female society; no public amusements, library, or music, there is a sad monotony in their life. They are very hospitable to strangers, and do not spare any attentions to make a residence there agreeable. The chief resource to a traveller is at Lord Strangford's. At his table, or at the evening parties, were to be met individuals of different nations, chiefly Armenians and Franks; but there was a want of vivacity and interest in them, arising from the restraint produced by the unfortunate state of affairs, and all interchange of visits with the other ambassadors being at an end.

At the palace at this time was Lady G. T., a younger sister of Lady Hester Stanhope, and possessed of the same spirit of enterprise and courage, though less romantic and Oriental. She had just arrived from Persia, by way of Georgia, and had travelled great part of the way on horseback. At Tebriz an offer was made her of an introduction to the seraglio of the Prince Royal of Persia; but it was declined. Such an offer occurs but once in a person's life. The beautiful author of the "Letters from Turkey" would have embraced it with delight, for she was a favourite with the Oriental women, and no subsequent traveller has ever had her opportunities of knowing and describing them, or perhaps ever will. What can be more exquisite than her picture of Fatima, the Pacha of Adrianople's bride, endowed with that mild dignity and sweetness of carriage so often possessed by the Turkish ladies, and seated amidst her handmaids, directing their tasks of embroidery; each of whom was selected for her beauty, but herself "so gloriously beautiful" as to excel all her visitor had ever beheld!

Before leaving Stamboul, it is but justice to

say something of the singular honesty of the Turks. On landing at Galati, my effects were carried by a porter; and proceeding up one of the crowded streets, we entirely lost sight of him, and turned towards a coffee-house, as I concluded he had made off with them; but the Swedish captain of the vessel, who had been here before, declared such a circumstance was never known here. In a short time we observed the poor fellow returning down the street, and looking most anxiously on every side.—In the bazaars a merchant will often go away and leave his shop and effects exposed, without the least concern. In their dealings it is rare to find any attempt to defraud: and in the whole of my journey through various parts of the empire, often lodging in the humblest cottages, and in the most remote situations, I never suffered the loss of the most trifling article among the Turks.

An amusing incident befel Mr. R., a gentleman attached to the palace, during our stay here. He had lost a leg while in the navy, and, being very desirous of visiting the great bazaar, he rode through it on horseback; a privilege

used by none but Turks, and in these disturbed times rather dangerous. A Bostandgi Bashee, an officer of some rank, being enraged on observing this, came up and struck with his sabre at Mr. R.'s wooden leg. The Turk's astonishment at seeing no blood flow, or wound inflicted, was very great. He lifted his sabre and cut with good will through part of the leg, but finding it all useless, he drew back without uttering a word, and gazed intently on the Frank.

The janizaries, of whom there are fifty thousand at present in and around Constantinople, are uncommonly fine men. If these men would submit to European discipline and the use of the bayonet, they would have little reason to fear a contest with the Russians, to whom they bear a deadly hatred. The unfortunate Selim's resolution to bring these haughty troops into discipline, cost him his throne; but about two years after his relative Mahmoud was made Emperor, the janizaries began to regret that they had ever deposed Selim; for he was as eminent for his amiable qualities as for his personal beauty. A large body of them advanced tumultuously to

the foot of the palace walls, and with loud cries demanded Selim. That prince, who had been kept a close prisoner, heard with the liveliest emotion the clamours of the janizaries. Mahmoud instantly ordered the Kislar Aga, the chief of the black eunuchs, with two mutes, to dispatch him. This man, the instrument of the Sultan's crimes as well as pleasures, is horribly ugly, and supposed to have great influence with his master. As they broke into his apartment, Selim instantly knew their purpose; and possessing great strength, he struck down the mutes on each side, and was making his way out of the door; to throw himself over the wall among the janizaries, which would have given him the empire again, but the Kislar Aga wounded him in such a manner, that Selim fainted with the agony of pain, when the bow-string was instantly placed round his neck, and his body thrown over to the soldiers. The janizaries uttered loud lamentations, and knelt round the body, weeping bitterly; but, dismayed by his death, they retired without any further effort.

LETTER III.

ALEXANDRIA.

We left at last the "Pride of the East," at sight of which the Prophet might have smiled with much greater reason than he did at that of Grand Cairo. We sailed from Constantinople on board an English vessel bound to Smyrna. Having cast anchor near the town of the Dardanelles on the following morning, we went on shore to visit the site of the ancient Abydos, about two miles distant. A lofty tumulus, with some remains of walls on the side towards the sea, mark the spot. The distance across the strait to where Sestos is supposed to have stood, is scarcely a mile; and any strong and practised swimmer might pass it without much difficulty. I was little aware then, that this passage was destined

to be a fatal one, a few weeks afterwards, to a young and very amiable traveller; who perished, in consequence of attempting to imitate Leander and Lord Byron, of a violent fever, brought on by over-exertion, and the being so long in the water. It was a lovely moonlight night when we lost sight of the shores of the Dardanelles; and a fine wind bore us towards Scio. On board were two natives of the northern part of England, who had gone to Persia with the hope of getting rich by engaging in a cotton-manufactory, set on foot at Tebriz by a young English merchant. The latter had lost all his little property in the attempt, having been deluded, he said, by false representations; and, at last, after a long and difficult journey over-land with the two natives of Lancashire, had succeeded in reaching Constantinople. To hear the latter, in their broad provincial dialect, relate their adventures in Persia—their passage over mountains covered with snow and plains parched with heat, half starved at one time, and abused or pursued at another—was very amusing. Amidst the tumults and massacres of Stamboul, a piece

of peculiar good fortune befel me, in the engaging my romantic and invaluable servant, Michelle Milovich, a Sclavonian: had I been a Moslemin, I would ever after have blessed the Prophet for causing that day to shine on me. He spoke seven languages, had read a great deal, and travelled yet more, was perfectly brave, conversed with much intelligence, and to wander through new scenes was his passionate delight. "I have heard, Sir," he first addressed me, "you are going to Egypt, and shall be very happy to attend you there. I have travelled over the greater part of the world, but cannot die in peace till I have seen the Pyramids and the ruins of Thebes." My only companion in many a solitude and sorrow, more than once the preserver of my life, and always devoted and faithful; how can I ever think of him without attachment, or forget his tears when we parted?

On the fourth morning, as the sun rose, we were close to the Isle of Scio. Its appearance is very singular: six or eight miles from the

shore is a lofty chain of barren and purple rocks, which shut out all view of the interior, and the space between these and the sea is covered with delightful gardens and verdure, which inclose the town on every side, except towards the main.

The fine climate of this isle, the profusion of delicious fruits, the beauty of its women, and the friendly and hospitable character of the people, caused it to be preferred by travellers to any other of the Greek islands. In the evening, when the setting sun was resting on the craggy mountains and the rich gardens at their feet, the shores and the shaded promenades around the town were filled with the Greek population, among which were multitudes of the gay and handsome women of Scio, distinguished for their frank and agreeable manners.

On landing, we went to the Consul's house: he was a Sciote, and received us with much civility. His wife and daughter, who were both very plain, made their appearance, and sweetmeats and fruit, with coffee, were handed round.

The day was sultry, and the water-melons and oranges, which were in great abundance, were very refreshing.

The unfortunate Sciotes were the most effeminate and irresolute of all the Greeks. The merchants lived in a style of great luxury, and the houses of many of them were splendidly furnished. From the commencement of the revolution, they contrived to preserve a strict neutrality; and, though often implored and menaced by their countrymen, refused to fight for the liberties of Greece, or risk the drawing on themselves the vengeance of the Turks. So well had they kept up appearances, that the Ottoman fleet never molested them: till, unfortunately, one day a Greek leader entered the harbour with some ships, having a body of troops on board, who were landed to attack the citadel, in which was a small Turkish garrison; and the Sciotes, fancying the hour of freedom was come, passed from one extreme to the other, rose tumultuously, and joined the troops. The fort was soon taken, and the garrison, together with the Turks who were in the town, was put to

the sword. This was scarcely accomplished, when the Ottoman fleet entered the harbour; and the Greek forces, who had come from Samos, too inferior in number to cope with them, instantly embarked, and took to flight, leaving the island to its fate. Those islanders who had taken part with them, consisted chiefly of the lower orders; and two hundred of the chief merchants and magistrates repaired on board the ship of the Capitan Pacha, and made the most solemn protestations of innocence, and unqualified submission to the Porte. The admiral received them with great civility, expressed himself willing to forget all that had passed, and ordered coffee and a variety of refreshments. But no sooner had the Pacha landed his forces, about six thousand men, than he gave the signal for the massacre The details given me afterwards by Sciotes who had escaped were enough to harrow up the soul. During the massacre, the Turks, exhausted, sheathed at times their bloody sabres and ataghans, and, seated beneath the trees on the shore, took their pipes and coffee, chatted, or fell asleep in the shade. In the course of a few hours they

rose refreshed, and began to slay indiscriminately all who came in their way. It was vain to implore mercy; the young and gay Sciotes, but a few days before the pride of the islands, found their loveliness no shield then, but fell stabbed before their mothers' eyes, or, flying into the gardens, were caught by their long and braided tresses, and quickly dispatched. The wild and confused cries of pain and death were mingled with the fierce shouts of Mohammed and vengeance; the Greek was seen kneeling for pity, or flying with desperate speed, and the Turkish soldier rushing by with his reeking weapon, or holding in his hand some head dripping with blood. The close of the day brought little reprieve; the moonlight spreading vividly over the town, the shores, and the rich groves of fruit-trees, rendered escape or concealment almost impossible. But, as the work of death paused at intervals from very weariness, the loud sounds of horror and carnage sunk into those of more hushed and bitter woe. The heart-broken wail of parents over their dying and violated child—the hurried and shuddering

tones of despair of those to whom a few hours would bring inevitable death—the cry of the orphan and widowed around the mangled forms of their dearest relatives, mingled with curses on the murderer, went up to heaven! But the pause for mourning was short—the stillness of the night was suddenly broken by the clash of arms and the dismal war-cry of the Ottoman soldiery, "Death!—death to the Greeks—to the enemies of the Prophet—Allah il Allah;"—and the Capitan Pacha in the midst, with furious gestures, urged on his troops to the slaughter. Every house and garden were strewed with corpses: beneath the orange-trees, by the fountain side, on the rich carpet, and the marble pavement, lay the young, the beautiful, and the aged, in the midst of their loved and luxurious retreats. Day after day passed; and lying as they fell, alone, or in groups, no hand bore them to their graves, while survivors yet remained to perish. At last, when all was over, they were thrown in promiscuous heaps, the senator and the delicate and richly attired woman of rank mingled with the lowest of the

populace, into large pits dug for the purpose, which served as universal sepulchres.

Twenty thousand are computed to have perished during the few days the massacre lasted. Happy were the few who could pass the barrier of rocky mountains, beyond which they were for the time secure, or who were received into some of the boats and vessels on the coast, and thus were snatched from their fate. It was my fortune afterwards to meet several times with these wretched fugitives, wandering in search of an asylum; so pale, worn, and despairing, they presented a picture of exquisite misery—girls of a tender age on foot, sinking beneath the heat and toil of the way, yet striving to keep up with the horses that bore the sick and disabled of their party: and mothers with their infants whom they had saved, while their husbands and sons had perished. One who had been a lady in her own land, weeping bitterly, related to me the murder of all her children, who were five young men. Many a young Sciote woman was to be seen, her indulgent home lost for ever, her beauty and vivacity

quite gone, with haggard and fearful looks seeking in other lands for friends whom she might never find.

About two or three hours' walk along the shore is the spot where Homer is said to have kept his school; it is a rock within which are still visible the remains of seats cut out. The poet certainly displayed an excellent taste in his choice of a situation: a noble group of trees stands close by, and a fountain of the purest water gushes out in their shade; in front, and around, are the beautiful harbour, and cottages amidst delicious gardens; and behind, precipices of purple rocks rising in their nakedness. The Turks are fond of enjoying the coolness and shade of this spot; the follower of the Prophet smoking his pipe and performing his ablutions where Mæonides was inspired!

A few miles from the town, and approached by a rugged path, is the large convent of Nehahmonce. The chapel is richly ornamented, the dome being formed of different kinds of marble, varied with pieces of richly stained glass, and having altogether a strange appear-

ance; the lofty mountains around have many of their abrupt declivities covered with firs. The condition and advantages of the Greek clergy are much superior to those of the Catholics. The former are allowed to marry if they have not taken priests' orders; and appear to lead a pleasanter life, and are more free and courteous in their manners, than their brethren of Rome; and their convents are infinitely more neat and clean. This monastery of Nehahmonce allows every traveller the privilege of remaining several days under its roof, where he will find a comfortable chamber and good fare; for if there are any wines or provisions *par excellence* in their neighbourhood, monks are sure to have them.

The soil of this island produces an abundance of excellent fruits, the fig, olive, orange, almond, and pomegranate; the climate is healthy and delightful; and, with the exception of the Isle of Rhodes, a stranger could not find a more desirable residence. The red wine is the most esteemed in the island; a small part only is exported, the Greeks making too good a use of it

themselves. It cannot greatly soothe or propitiate a Turk's feelings towards the despised and infidel Greeks, to see them quaffing with keen delight the rich juice of the grape, and giving loose in the moment to unbounded gaiety, while he, poor forbidden follower of Islam! must solace himself gravely with the pure fountain, his meagre sherbet, or at most a cup of the coffee of Mocha. At the distance of some miles in the interior, are seen at intervals the country seats of the rich Greeks and Turks; very handsome residences, built of stone, with luxuriant gardens adjoining, and placed often in romantic situations; and such a number of aromatic shrubs are scattered over the country, that the air is perfumed with their fragance. The gum-mastich grows here, which is used by the Grecian and Turkish women: but the former strive to heighten their charms by adding paint; they go unveiled, and are gaily and richly dressed.

But no aid or ornament—not even the faint remains of the adored features of antiquity—can invest the Greek with the dignity of air and

carriage, and the elegance and mildness of manners of the Ottoman lady. But it is hard to leave a Grecian isle without feelings of regret. Of the different countries it has been my delight to visit, were I to choose a residence, it would not be on the shores of the Bosphorus, with the mountains of Europe and Asia rising from the water's edge; their sides covered with groves, villages, and delicious retreats, and between their feet the deep and lovely glens which put a Moslemin in mind of Paradise—nor in the glorious plain of Damascus, with its rushing streams and gardens of unrivalled luxury, embracing the sacred city in their deep bosom—but in some isle like Scio or Rhodes, of a pure and equal climate; its shaded walks leading through woods of orange, almond, and citron; above which rise its pointed and purpled mountains, their wild bosoms covered with a thousand fragrant shrubs, the odours of which fill the air: where the sun sets in glory on the wave, and gilds the summits of other isles, which appear all around at the horizon's verge; and the moonlight brings softer scenery, with the guitar, the

sweet island-songs, and the murmur on the shore.

We left Scio at last, and on the following evening arrived in the harbour of Smyrna. It is of great extent, and you sail a long time between its shores of rugged mountains, with a line of rich verdure and trees at their feet, ere you arrive at the city, situated at its very extremity. Smyrna possesses a large population, and an extensive commerce: the streets are narrow; but the quarter inhabited by the Frank merchants and consuls contains a number of excellent houses, with terraced roofs, which afford a pleasant promenade. Many of the Europeans intermarry with the Greek families; and the Smyrniote ladies, thus blending Oriental and Frank manners and customs, are considered extremely attractive;—the turbaned head bent over the harp and piano, and the Scotch and Irish melodies sung on the shores of Asia, are no common fascinations. The Turkish burying-ground stands on the slope of the hill, at a small distance from the town, near that of the Jews,

and is encircled by a deep grove of cypress-trees. No guard or shade around a cemetery can be so suitable as that of this noble tree: with its waveless and mournful foliage, it looks the very emblem of mortality. The Orientals love that every thing should be sad and impressive round the abodes of the dead, which they never approach but with the deepest reverence; and they often sit for hours in their kiosques on the Bosphorus, gazing with mournful pleasure on the shores of Asia, where the ashes of their fathers are laid; for the rich Turk of Stamboul generally wishes to be carried after death to the Asiatic side, which he believes destined to be the last resting-place and empire of his countrymen, "when the fair men from the North shall have driven them from Europe."

The society of Smyrna, consisting of the European merchants and their families, who mixed together on the most friendly footing, was very agreeable: the public rooms, called the Casino, handsomely fitted up, were open at eight o'clock every evening, and possessed a reading-room; and travellers and strangers

from all parts met there to take refreshments and enjoy the society; and balls were occasionally held. But the face of things was entirely changed at the time of our residence there. The Casino and its amusements were closed, there was little interchange of visits between European families, and the charming promenades around the town were deserted, the whole of the Greek families of the better order having fled: the bazars looked silent and empty, and the numerous caravans from the interior no longer arrived. The village of Bournabat, composed chiefly of the handsome country-houses of the European merchants, is distant a few miles from the city, and affords a very pleasant ride to the traveller, the country around being well cultivated, and adorned with groves of olive and other trees. The storks are seen in great numbers at particular seasons around Smyrna and at Bournabat: they are very tame, and are regarded with a superstitious feeling by the Turks. They sometimes frequent the ruins of temples and villages; but their appearance, and the noise they make,

harmonize little with the aspect of desolation and decay: the clusters of pigeons of many-coloured plumage, which flew around and nestled amidst the ruins of the Temple of the Sun at Balbec, had an effect much more in harmony with the splendid remains and scenery of the plain so truly and beautifully described in "Lalla Rookh."

In Smyrna we lodged at the hotel kept by an Italian. The windows of the apartments commanded a fine view of the bay and its romantic shores. Several Greek priests and merchants dined at the table d'hôte, where we had a medley of Greek and European dishes. They looked very care-worn and suspicious; and they had good reason, for they could not go out of doors without danger of being murdered. One morning, as I stood in the street, a Greek servant, for declining to buy meat at the stall of a Candiote butcher not far off, was stabbed by him with his long knife, and fell bleeding on the pavement About fifty Greeks got on board a Ragusan vessel, in order to escape, the captain having been paid a large

sum of money by them. Instead of instantly making off, he continued to loiter in the harbour, in spite of the warnings of the consul; when one night he was surrounded by three Turkish vessels, and all on board were seized. The captain and crew were hanged, and the Greeks were beheaded in a small square in the city, at sunrise, during out stay. The French consul, to his immortal honour, has saved the lives of hundreds of the Greeks, by his active and spirited interference; and has rescued them from the hands of the soldiery, about to put them to death. In walking through the city you see these unfortunate people looking over the walls, and half-opening their doors, and listening to every passing sound. At any sudden noise in the streets, the faces of the women—and some of them beautiful—were seen thrust out of the windows of the lofty houses, where they had taken refuge; thereby exposing themselves to fresh danger, yet unable to repress their anxiety and curiosity. The only Greek I ever saw, whose face and form in any way realized the *beau idéal* of antiquity, was at

the entrance of a poor dwelling in the skirts of the city: her fine tall figure, reclined against the wall as she stood, and her head bent towards some unhappy countrywomen, whom she was addressing, gave additional interest to the perfect symmetry of her noble and classic features.

The inextinguishable lightness and versatility of character of the Greeks are real blessings their present situation; no vicissitudes appear to strike them with surprise or despair: active, enterprising, and indefatigable, they possess the materials for making excellent soldiers: vain to excess, and ever sanguine in all their hopes and undertakings, I heard them exclaim, as they marched out of Tripolitza to attack the Turks, "We have beat them with sticks ere now; and shall we not drive them before us with our swords?"—Call on a Greek to die, and he will take leave of the world, to appearance, passionless and undismayed: bring the guitar and the wine, and he will dance, talk with infinite gaiety, and sing the Moriote songs all the night long.

A circumstance of a very interesting and affecting kind occurred at this time in one of the Greek isles. A number of the islanders, terrified at the approach of a Turkish force, hurried on board a large boat, and pushed off from the land. The wife of one of them, a young woman of uncommon loveliness, seeing her husband departing, stood on the shore, stretching out her hands towards the boat, and imploring, in the most moving terms, to be taken on board. The Greek saw it without concern or pity, and, instead of aiding her escape, bade his companions hasten their flight. This unfortunate woman, left unprotected in the midst of her enemies, struggled through scenes of difficulty and danger, of insult and suffering, till her failing health and strength, with a heart broken by sorrow, brought her to her death-bed. She had never heard from her husband; and, when wandering amongst the mountains, or lying hid in some wretched habitation, or compelled to urge her flight amidst cruel fatigues, her affection for him, and the hope of meeting him again, bore up her courage through all. He came at last,

when the enemy had retreated and the Greeks had sought their homes again; and learning her situation, was touched with the deepest remorse. But all hope of life was then extinguished; her spirit had been tried to the utmost; love had changed to aversion, and she refused to see or forgive him. There is at times in the character of the Greek women, as was observed on more than one occasion, a strength and sternness that is truly remarkable. The sister and relations of the unfortunate wife alluded to were standing round her bed; and never in the days of her health and love did she look so touchingly beautiful as then: her fine dark eyes were turned on them with a look, as if she mourned not to die, but still felt deeply her wrongs: the natural paleness of her cheek was crimsoned with a hectic hue, and the rich tresses of her black hair fell dishevelled by her side. Her friends, with tears, entreated her to speak to and forgive her husband; but she turned her face to the wall, and waved her hand for him to be gone. Soon the last pang came over her, and then affection conquered;—she turned sud-

denly round, raised a look of forgiveness to him, placed her hand in his, and died!

We took passage on board a French ship bound to Alexandria, and for three days had a favourable wind, when we fell in with a division of the Greek fleet: they obliged us to bring to, and sent an armed boat on board to demand our destination and cargo, and whatever intelligence we could give them. These Greeks behaved very civilly: their best ships were merchant-vessels turned into those of war, and carried twenty guns: they were from the isle of Hydra, the natives of which are the best and boldest sailors in their navy. The wind failed us, and we were put to our resources to pass the time agreeably; but in French vessels a passenger is always less at a loss in calms and baffling winds than in any other, as the men seldom lose their gaiety and good spirits. The mate, who seemed to have the chief command, was a fine and animated young Frenchman, who had a small collection of interesting books; the nominal captain, Monsieur Gras by name, was a little fat man, with a serious and melancholy aspect. Every morning

and evening, before breakfast and supper, the crew were summoned to the poop, and he recited prayers in a sad and distinct tone, to which they all responded. On board was a most motley assemblage of passengers. A fat young German, who was on his way to Grand Cairo, to set up for a doctor and cure the Turks and Arabs, without knowing a word of their language, was accompanied by a sprightly young Italian woman, who had left her dear land to live with this phlegmatic fellow on the banks of the Nile: his pipe scarcely ever quitted his mouth, and he told marvellous tales, sitting on the deck with a naked neck and bosom *à l'oriental.* There was also a tailor from Italy, of a pale countenance and spare figure, destined for Alexandria to exercise his calling; and he put one in mind of the button-maker from Sheffield, who came on speculation to Constantinople with a cargo of his material, and found the Turks never wore buttons. A third was a dog-merchant, also an Italian, with his wife: he had a number of dogs of a very fine breed, to dispose of in Egypt, if he could find purchasers among the Franks or

the faithful. These three worthies and their two *chères amies* (the tailor having no tender companion with him) travelled in great harmony together, and, while the baffling winds lasted, afforded no small amusement. But at last we drew near the low and sandy shores around Alexandria. How sweet after a voyage the first sight of land is, every traveller has felt; and Pompey's Pillar on the eminence above the town, the canal from the Nile just beyond, and thousand recollections attached to the residence of Cleopatra, gave an intense interest to that now before us.

LETTER IV.

EGYPT.

After a delay of a few hours we landed at Alexandria. It was mid-day; the heat was excessive, and there were few passengers in the streets. We were quickly doomed to feel what might well be termed the succession of the Egyptian plague; swarms of flies were perpetually fastening on our faces and eyes, so that we could scarcely find our way, and were obliged to keep our handkerchiefs perpetually waving. When we entered a coffee-house, our sherbet or lemonade was instantly covered by a dark mass of insects, if we happened to leave up the tin cover with which the drinking-vessels are always provided to guard against this invasion. We went to an okkal, and ordered

some dinner: the apartment was filled with a variety of people of different costumes: a Turk felt disposed to entertain them with a song—he put his two fore-fingers behind his ears, and bending forward as he sat cross-legged, ejected such hideous nasal sounds, intended to be pathetic, that we were obliged to take refuge in a small room upstairs. Here they soon brought us a dish of kid, deliciously dressed, and a dessert of fruit, which, with some excellent coffee, made a superb repast after the starvation on board ship. We hired apartments in a private house, and took possession of them the same evening; but the mosquitoes were dreadfully annoying—it was almost useless to close your eyes, for you were quickly awakened by half-a-dozen keen bites on different parts of the body; but the face was the favourite part, which next morning looked any thing but pale or fair.

The following day, having hired a couple of donkeys, the universal mode of conveyance in this country, and an Egyptian guide, I rode to Pompey's Pillar. It is Corinthian; the shaft is

about ninety feet high, and the base about five; it is formed of three pieces of red granite, and stands on a small eminence. It may be seen from a great distance around. The Needle of Cleopatra, not far off, is near seventy feet in height, and formed of an entire piece of the same stone, covered with hieroglyphics, some of which are nearly effaced. The guide who attended me was a handsome elderly Egyptian, of a tall figure, and white beard; and was dressed in a long blue cloak, which left his bust and arms naked: he walked and ran beside our noble coursers in the intense heat of the day. Vast and shapeless heaps of ruins are all that remains of ancient Alexandria, and one cannot well imagine a residence more mournful and heart-oppressing than the modern city. Tracts of sand spread on every side, varied here and there by a spot of verdure, or a group of palms. There is not one object of interest, or a single pleasant walk, in the flat and monotonous region around. The Convent of Mahmoudich and the English Consul's garden, are the only exceptions. The

houses of the city, at least the European part, are in general lofty, and plastered white. Those of the merchants are handsomely furnished, and well adapted to the climate, which is the coolest in Egypt, a fine breeze from the sea setting in regularly every day. There are several coffee-houses kept by Franks here, of which the principal one was the only tolerable place of resort—where are met the merchants, adventurers, and natives of different countries. The fortifications erected by Mahmoud Ali, the Pacha of Egypt, around this city, are extensive and strong. This Prince is admirably fitted to rise to eminence in the Turkish empire. Of Greek extraction, possessed of great talents, a wily politician, yet daring and bloody in the execution of his plans,—as was proved in the massacre of the three hundred Mameluke Beys, whom he invited to a banquet,—the time will soon come when he will throw off his dependence on the Porte, and erect Egypt into a sovereignty. He is very fond of Europeans, and has engaged a great many in his service; and being perfectly free from bigotry to the

faith of the Prophet, he never requires them to change their religion. He is ardently desirous to improve his country, and has established a sugar-manufactory on the Nile, and several of cotton in Cairo. He longed for the luxury of eating ice; and there being no such thing in Egypt, Mr. Salt, the British Consul-general, sent to England for an apparatus for making it. The machine was conveyed, on its arrival, to the Pacha's palace, and the Nile water made use of for the purpose. Mahmoud Ali hung over the whole operation with intense curiosity; and when, after several disappointments, a large piece of real ice was produced, he took it eagerly in his hand, and danced round the room for joy like a child, and then ran into the harem to show it to his wives and mistresses; and ever since he luxuriates upon it. The great canal of Cleopatra, which he has lately made, or rather revived, forty miles in length, connecting the Nile with the sea at Alexandria, is an extraordinary work: for a considerable time he employed a hundred and fifty thousand men about it, chiefly Arabs of Upper Egyyt;

of these, twenty thousand died during the progress of the work. Having ridden out early one morning in the neighbourhood of the city, and entered an elegant house which Ali was building for his son, we suddenly heard the sounds of music from without, and perceived it was the Pacha himself, with his guard, who had just arrived from Cairo. He was on foot, and stood on the lofty bank of a new canal he was making, earnestly observing the innumerable workmen beneath. He was of middle stature, and plainly dressed; his age appeared between fifty and sixty; his features were good, and had a calm and thoughtful character; and his long grey beard fell over his breast. The bed of the canal below presented a novel spectacle, being filled with vast numbers of Arabs of various colours, toiling in the intense heat of the day, while their Egyptian taskmasters, with whips in their hands, watched the progress of their labour. It was a just and lively representation of the children of Israel forced to toil by their oppressive masters of old. The wages Mahmoud allowed these unfortunate people,

whom he had obliged to quit their homes and families in Upper Egypt to toil about this work, were only a penny a-day, and a ration of bread. Yet such is the buoyancy of spirits of the Arabs, that they go through their heavy toil with gaiety and cheerfulness. By moonlight I took a walk round the spot where they were encamped: they were seated under their rude tents, or lying down in ranks without any covering but the sky, eating their coarse meal of bread; yet nothing was heard all around but the songs of their country, unmelodious enough, mingled with the loud clapping of hands in concert, which is always with them a sign of joy.

The distance to Rosetta from this town is about two or three days' journey. The contrast of scene is delightful on approaching the former place. Situated in the midst of groves of date-trees, and gardens of banana, orange, and lemon-trees, on the banks of the Nile, Rosetta is probably the most desirable residence in Egypt. At present its commerce has much declined, and is inferior to that of Damietta, though few

places can be more monotonous or stupid than the latter town, situated on a perfect flat.

A wedding that took place at Damietta, on the occasion of the marriage of the Consul's daughter, afforded an amusing scene. The Consul, who was a native of the country, invited all the travellers to the ceremony and the feast. The bride was attired in her gaudiest apparel, her hair braided in the most exquisite manner, and her eyelashes and brows tinged with surmeh. All the relations, and a great number of friends were present, and the banquet was profuse and luxurious; the company sitting on cushions ranged against the walls. The dishes, of the Turkish and Grecian cookery, were handed round in succession, with various kinds of wines, and a profusion of sweetmeats and sherbet. At last, when the music was brought, and the lights threw a vivid glare through the room, the company became gay and joyous, and a number of Almeh girls commenced their voluptuous dance to the noise of the tambour and castanets. Many of the guests of both sexes joined in dancing, while others formed in groups to enjoy their

chibouque and coffee. The bride and bridegroom stood beside each other, and looked very inanimate and unimpassioned: the former, who was an insipid good-looking girl, seeming resolved nothing should ruffle her Oriental apathy. After they had retired, the mirth of the company became more vociferous, and was kept up till a late hour. The Consul had a very pretty wife, of whom he was extremely fond, and to whom he behaved with as much and more deference than if he had been a European husband. He never ventured to join her parties unless invited; but this is the Eastern etiquette, the ladies who visit the harem being always sacred from intrusion. He one day introduced to her two English travellers, who were at Damietta: she was reclining on soft cushions, and had on a handsome robe of green, and no turban on her head. She had large black eyes, a languishing look, and a complexion perfectly colourless: in conversation she seemed to be indeed without an idea.

Having taken passage on board a vessel of the country for Cairo, we sailed up the canal,

the shores of which presented nothing but sand and barrenness to the view. But how delightfully the scene was changed, when, on coming upon deck early the next morning, we perceived the vessel going slowly down the Nile! It was just before sunrise, and the softest hues were spreading all over the horizon. The shores were covered with groves of palm, among which were numerous villages, while here and there the white thin minaret rose into the air, and a universal stillness reigned throughout the scene. It was impossible to find oneself, for the first time, on this celebrated river, without the liveliest emotion. The boat stopped for some hours at the town of Foua. Having bathed in the river, I walked through the town: though so early, the shops were open, and fruit selling in the streets: more than one good Moslem, who had just risen from his bed, had taken his seat without his door, and with the Koran in his hand, was reading the Prophet's splendid promises, or teaching his child his prayers. Even in this town there were twelve mosques; and the Muezzin, from the top of the minaret, had

begun to call to prayers. This cry, in so still a country as Egypt, and heard at the dawn or at night from a distance, has an effect the most beautiful and solemn that can be conceived. The Orientals choose those who have the most powerful and melodious voices for this service. Often on the Nile in Upper Egypt, when the silence of the desert has been around, that cry has come from afar:—"There is but one God —God alone is great and eternal, and Mohammed is his Prophet,"—like the voice of an undying being calling from the upper air. The Nile is, in general, a calm and beautiful river, about a quarter or half a mile wide, frequently less, but during the inundation it often spreads two or three miles in width. Having returned on board, instead of some rice and a piece of buffalo, which I had pictured might be the fare in Egypt, I found a traveller might have his luxuries here as well as in more civilized lands; as my breakfast consisted of new bread, milk warm from the cow, coffee of the East, delicious grapes, and fresh cheese. On board were a number of passengers of various descriptions.

Among them was a Janizary above the common rank, on his way to Cairo, where he had a home: he was a little man, well dressed and armed, and amused himself with abusing the Arabs; and having spread his handsome carpet on the deck, and reclined on it, with his pipe, he looked about him like a lord: he had three or four mistresses. On the deck, beneath a canopy, and attended by her black slaves, sat an Egyptian lady: she sometimes allowed a portion of her features to appear, and, though in general shrouded from view, contrived to see very well all that was going on upon deck, as we found by the occasional loud peals of laughter that came from behind the curtain: once or twice she sent us a present of some sweetmeats. In a small cabin adjoining ours, were two Frenchmen, who laughed and talked as if they were in Paris, took their meals *à la Française*, the *dejeûné à la fourchette* at eleven, and dinner at six, in defiance of Orientalism: there were sundry other passengers of less note. Our progress was rather slow, as the crew appeared indifferent sailors; but nothing could be more lovely than to

glide along at night in the calm cloudless moonlight: amidst such scenery it was difficult to close one's eyes in sleep. The effect of the moonlight on the eyes in this country is singularly injurious: the natives tell you, as I found afterwards they also did in Arabia, always to cover your eyes when you sleep in the open air. It is rather strange that passage in the Psalms, "the sun shall not strike thee by day, nor the moon by night," should not have been thus illustrated, as the allusion seems direct. The moon here really strikes and affects the sight, when you sleep exposed to it, much more than the sun: a fact, of which I had a very unpleasant proof one night, and took care to guard against it afterwards: indeed the sight of a person who should sleep with his face exposed at night, would soon be utterly impaired or destroyed.

On the second day a very distressing circumstance happened. Our Reis, or captain, was a respectable and venerable old man, very devout; and it being past mid-day, and the vessel crowded with passengers, he was anxious to be as retired as possible at his afternoon prayers, and went

into the small boat astern. He had knelt and turned his face to Mecca, and was quite absorbed in his religious exercises, his long white beard and tranquil features, with his position, presenting a meet picture of Oriental devotion, when, in making one of his prostrations, he bowed too low, and losing his balance, plunged headlong into the Nile. The alarm was instantly spread, and "The Reis, the Reis is in the water!" resounded from all parts of the ship. The vessel was going at a rapid rate, and we saw him borne down by the stream for some distance, buffeting with the waves, and uttering feeble cries. Three Arabs, who were good swimmers, plunged overboard, but they were unable to overtake him. The old man's life was quite thrown away: had the ship been backed immediately, he would have been saved; but the confusion on board was so great, that this was neglected. His son, a tall young Egyptian, walked to and fro for some time on the shore opposite to where his father sank, uttering loud lamentations, and calling sadly on Ali, the name of the old man.

On the fourth morning I landed with Michelle, and took a long walk by the shore, till we came to an Arab village, with a few date-trees around it. It was built, as all the Egyptian villages are, of unburnt brick; the houses consist only of one story, and the earth-floor is partly covered with rush-mats; and seats of earth, a few feet high, are raised next the wall, and covered with mats as a divan. We succeeded at one of the huts in procuring a bowl of delicious new milk, and some hot unleavened cakes baked on the hearth: Michelle, having bought a couple of fowls at another cottage, prepared one for dressing, as it was uncertain what time we should rejoin the ship. One of the Arab women undertook to cook the fowl, and carried it into the sanctuary of her house, which we were not suffered to defile by our presence: the Sultan could not be more watchful of his seraglio than these women, though they could not have a better guard to their honour than by putting one of their own faces at the entrance, for they were excessively plain. These people are of a dark complexion, and imprint their names in Arabic on

their wrists; and the women have a similar indelible mark, stained with a green colour, extending from the mouth to the chin. At last, having seated ourselves under the shade of a wall, amidst a crowd of Arabs, some naked and some clothed, the fowl made its appearance, swimming like a great frog in a large vessel of hot water, and we had to tear it in pieces with our fingers. These people are very indolent, are seldom seen at work in the fields; and though the Nile has plenty of fish, they do not care to be at the trouble of catching them.

On the Monday morning we entered Boulac, the port of Grand Cairo. Our effects being put on a camel, and asses being procured, we proceeded a mile and half to the consular house, passing, ere we arrived at the city, through large uninhabited tracts, covered with sand and enormous heaps of rubbish, the ruins of the old city. The day before, we passed near the village where the family and relations of the unfortunate old Reis lived. His son landed there to meet a number of friends who drew near; and when the latter understood the unhappy death

of the father, they began to mourn in a loud voice, and for a good while continued to join their tears and wailings, striking their breasts and clasping their hands. The Orientals, on the various occasions I have had of observing them, express with great force and simplicity the stronger emotions of the soul,—of sorrow, of joy, or of meeting after a long separation. The parting of a Turkish family in Greece, when death hung over every member of it—the meeting of two friendly tribes of Arabs in the desert,—were scenes never to be erased from my remembrance.

Mr. Salt, the Consul-general, who was at Alexandria on our arrival there, having handsomely requested us to make his house our home during our stay at Cairo, we proceeded thither. It is in a very retired situation, the approach being through narrow streets and passages. It was now the month of August; and though the weather was very sultry, I did not in general find the heat oppressive, except when walking out at mid-day. The purity and charm of the mornings and evenings in this splendid climate

are very great: a cloud is scarcely to be seen in the sky; or, when visible, it is of the most transparent whiteness.

In Cairo you seek in vain to realize the magnificent descriptions of the Oriental writers. The immense hills of rubbish on all sides of the city, which have been accumulating for ages, and which are still increased by what is brought out from Cairo daily on the backs of mules, prove the superior magnitude of the old city. But with regard to the general mass of the buildings, the modern capital is perhaps as splendid as the famous "Masr" of old: the palaces of the caliphs, and some other public buildings might have beautified the latter, but most of the streets of Cairo have an extremely antique appearance, and present in architecture and materials, no doubt, a picture of what it was formerly. In extent it is very inferior to Constantinople, and contains about two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. But much of the former is taken up with gardens, whereas Cairo is almost destitute of those elegances. The houses are built of brick of a dirty colour,

and are more lofty, aud the streets are wider, than those of the capital of Turkey. The windows of lattice or framework of wood often project a couple of feet beyond the wall, and admit a view of what is passing without, and are at the same time screened from observation: here the inhabitants love to sit. The interior of the houses, from their construction and the position of the windows, has scarcely any sun,—coolness and shade being studied as much as possible. The streets are unpaved, but hard; and to allay the dust and keep them cool, the inhabitants throw water over them. Camels, loaded with skins of water, are almost continually driven through them, and the water flows out on the path as they go along. A traveller is soon convinced that the Orientals judge rightly in building their capitals with such narrow streets; in this climate it is quite a luxury to enter one. The height of the houses, and the projection of the upper stories, keep them always cool and shaded, and the burning sun is excluded. This city is chiefly supplied with water from the Nile, in the conveyance of which

to the different dwellings a vast number of camels are daily employed. The houses have all terraced roofs, and that of the Consul's commands an extensive view of the city. It is delightful to rise by night, and walk there in the brilliant moonlight, which has the appearance of a tranquil and beautiful day: you can see to read with perfect ease. From thence you can look all around on the terraces of other dwellings, on which numbers of the inhabitants lie buried in sleep. During the greater part of the night you hear no sound in this wide capital, not even the tread of a passing traveller or houseless Arab; nothing disturbs the impressive tranquillity of the hour, which strikes on the imagination. The lonely palm-trees, scattered at intervals around, and rising high above the houses, are the only objects which break the view.

The habits of life of the Europeans resident at Cairo are very regular: you find individuals of Spain, France, Italy, Germany, &c., many of whom live in good style, and give handsome entertainments occasionally. One cannot find the comforts of an English breakfast at Cairo:

a cup of coffee and a piece of bread are ready at an early hour for whoever chooses; at mid-day comes a luxurious dinner, of foreign cookery, with the wines of Europe, and fruits of the East; and seven in the evening introduces supper,—another substantial meal, though rather less profuse than the dinner; and by ten o'clock most of the family retire. This is not the way of living best adapted to the climate, which seems to require only a slight refreshment during the sultry hours, and the solid meal to be reserved till the cool of the day. There is no good market to be found at Cairo; excellent mutton is always to be had, but other meats are difficult to be procured; of wine there is none save what is imported, and this is very dear, and not of good quality. The oranges and bananas of Rosetta, which are brought to Cairo, the fresh figs, pomegranates, almonds, and other nuts, afford an excellent dessert. A singular luxury in this city, as well as in every other in the East, is the Caimac, or clouted cream, exactly the same as that made in Devonshire and Cornwall, and manufactured in the same

manner. It is cried about the streets fresh every morning, and is sold on small plates; and in a place where butter is never seen, it is a rich and welcome substitute.—Many European ladies of different nations reside at Cairo, being married to Frank merchants: some of them are very agreeable women, and appear happy and contented with their situation. It is curious that you meet with women of every civilized land settled in the Eastern cities, save those of England. Scarcely ever will you find one of our own countrywomen living in climates and among customs so different from her own, though most of the English merchants are unmarried from this very reason. The want of the spirit of enterprise, and the over-attachment to their own comforts, are probably the causes which keep our ladies at home, or would make them unhappy abroad. I knew two who were settled in the East, but they were always complaining, and mourning after England.

The 16th of August was the day fixed on for the celebrated cutting of the bank of the Nile; a time of great rejoicing with the Egyptians, the

inundation being now at its height. It is the custom for a vast number of people of different nations to assemble and pass the night near the appointed spot. We resolved to go and mingle among them, not doubting that something highly interesting would occur. We arrived at the place about eight at night, it being distant a few miles from the city: there was firing of cannon, illuminations in *their* way, and exhibitions of fireworks. The shores of the Nile for a long way down from Boulac were covered with groups of people, some seated beneath the large-spreading sycamores, smoking; others gathered around parties of Arabs, who were dancing with infinite gaiety and pleasure, and uttering loud exclamations of joy, affording an amusing contrast to the passionless demeanour and tranquil features of their Moslem oppressors. After some time, we crossed to the opposite shore: the scene was here much more interesting; ranks of people were closely seated on the shelving banks of the Nile, and behind them was a long line of persons selling various articles of fruit and eatables. A little to the left, amidst widely scat-

tered groups of trees, stood several tents, and temporary coffee-houses, canopied over, and lighted with lamps. Perpetually moving over this scene, which (both shores and river, and groups of palms,) was illumined by the most brilliant moonlight, were seen Albanian soldiers in their national costume, Nubians from the burning clime of farther Egypt, Mamelukes, Arabs, and Turks. At a number of small sheds, each of which had its light, or small fire, you might have meat, fish, &c. ready dressed. We entered one of the coffee-houses, or large tents, to the top of which a row of lamps was suspended; and, the front being open, we could sip the refreshing beverage, and still enjoy the animated spectacle around. Being much fatigued, I wrapped my cloak round me, and slept for a couple of hours upon a rush-mat on the floor, so soundly as to hear nothing of a loud and desperate quarrel between some Arabs and Albanians in the same tent; but there was little cause for uneasiness in any situation, while my faithful Michelle was near; he knew so well the manners of these people, and possessed such per-

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fect presence of mind. The night was wearing fast away, and, leaving the tent, we again joined the various parties in the shade, or on the shore; some feasting and dancing, others buried in sleep. The other side of the beautiful river, which shone like glass in the splendid light, still presented a gay appearance; lights moving to and fro amidst the trees, boats pushing off with new comers, and sounds of gaiety, with the firing of musquetry, being still heard.

At last day broke, and soon after the report of a cannon announced that the event so ardently wished for was at hand. We proceeded to the spot, around which immense crowds were rapidly gathering. The high and shelving banks of the canal, into which the Nile was to be admitted, were crowded with spectators. We obtained an excellent situation for observing the ceremony, by fortunately meeting with Osmin, a Scotch renegade, but a highly respectable man, and the confidential servant of Mr. Salt. The Kiaya Bey, the chief minister of the Pacha, soon arrived with his guards, and took his seat on the summit of the opposite bank. A num-

ber of Arabs now began to dig down the dyke which confined the Nile, the bosom of which was covered with a number of pleasure-boats, full of people, waiting to sail down the canal through the city. Already the mound was only partly demolished, when the increasing dampness and shaking of the earth induced the workmen to leave off. Several Arabs then plunged into the stream, and, exerting all their strength to push down the remaining part, some openings were soon made, and the river broke through with irresistible violence. For some time it was like the rushing of a cataract. According to custom, the Kiaya Bey distributed a good sum of money, throwing it into the bed of the canal below, where a great many men and boys scrambled for it. Several of them had a sort of net, fastened on the top of a pole, to catch the money as it fell. It was an amusing scene, as the water gathered fast round them, to see them struggling and groping amidst the waves for the coin; but the violence of the torrent soon bore them away; and there were some who had lingered to the last, and now sought to

save themselves by swimming, still buffeting the waves, and grasping at the money showered down, and diving after it as it disappeared. Unfortunately this sport every year costs a few lives, and one young man was drowned this morning. The different vessels, long ere the fall had subsided, rushed into the canal and entered the city, their decks crowded with all ranks, uttering loud exclamations of joy. The overflowing of the Nile is the richest blessing of Heaven to the Egyptians: as it finds its way gradually into the various parts of the city and neighbourhood, the inhabitants crowd to drink of, and wash in it, and rejoice in its progress. The vast square, called the Birket, which on our arrival had presented a sad and dreary area, was now turned into a novel and beautiful scene, being covered with an expanse of water, out of the bosom of which arose the fine sycamore-trees. On one side of this square is a palace of the Pacha; on the opposite side is the Coptic quarter:—the palace of the chief of the Mamelukes, of a poor appearance, with some houses, fortifications, and ruins, forms the rest

of this square. In walking round the city, and observing so many flat and naked parts, destitute of verdure, and encompassed with piles of ruins, one can hardly conceive how the waters can ever reach them; but every day, after the cutting of the bank, it is interesting to see how silently and irresistibly space after space is changed from a dreary, useless desert, into a smiling bed of water, which brings health and abundance with it. The sounds of joy and festivity, of music and songs, are now heard all over the city, with cries of "Allah, Allah," and thanks to the Divine bounty for so inestimable a blessing.

LETTER V.

Egypt.

Not far from the city, on the way to the Desert, is the burial-place of the Mamelukes, the most splendid cemetery in Egypt. Here repose the Beys, with their followers, for many generations. The forms of the tombs are various, and often magnificent; over the sepulchres rise domes which are supported by slender marble columns, and some of these are finely carved. The tombs of the Caliphs are distant a mile and half in another direction from the city, amidst the sand: they are beautiful monuments in the light and elegant style of the Saracenic architecture, and are in a very perfect state of preservation. They are built of fine limestone, and are lofty square buildings,

with domes and minarets; some of the latter of exquisite workmanship.

One day I met a marriage-procession in the streets, conducting a young Egyptian bride to her husband. A square canopy of silk was borne along, preceded by several friends and slaves, all women, and three men followed with the tambourines and pipe. Two female relatives, who walked beside the bride, held the canopy over her; she was shrouded from head to foot, so closely and ungracefully, that not the least beauty of figure was discernible, and a thick white veil concealed her features, two holes only being left for her dark eyes to look through. Beneath this coarse exterior the richest dresses are often worn; but all is sacred, both form and feature, and splendid attire, till arrived in the harem of the bridegroom, when the disguise is suddenly thrown off, and his impatient looks are bent painfully or delightfully on his dear unknown. This procession moved at a very slow pace to the sounds of the music, and the lively cries of joy of the women.

Grand Cairo is encompassed by a wall, which is about ten miles in circumference, and of great antiquity. Mount Mokatam stands near the city, of which, and the whole country, it commands a most extensive prospect. This mountain is of a yellow colour, and perfectly barren. Beneath, and in a very elevated position, is the citadel, which is of great extent, and in many parts very ruinous. This fortress is now more famous for the massacre of the Mameluke Beys, than for any other event. The Mameluke force in Cairo consisted of from five to ten thousand choice troops, commanded by their various Beys. It was a novel and splendid spectacle to a stranger to view the exercises, the rich accoutrements, and capital horsemanship of the Mamelukes, which were exhibited every day in the great square of the city.

The chiefs and Mahmoud were constantly jealous of each other: he longed to curtail or destroy their power, and they dreaded his unprincipled ambition. After this state of affairs had lasted a good while, sometimes in open hostility, sometimes under a hollow friendship, the Pacha professed the most entire and

cordial reconciliation, terms of amity were agreed on, and he invited the Beys to a splendid banquet in the citadel. The infatuation of these unfortunate men was singular, in trusting to the protestations of a man whose faithless character they knew so well. It was a beautiful day, and the three hundred chiefs, on their most superb coursers and in their costliest robes, entered the long and winding pass that conducts to the citadel. This pass was so narrow, as to oblige each horseman to proceed singly; and broken and precipitous rocks rose on each side. The massy gate of entrance to the pass was closed on the last Mameluke, and the long file of chiefs, in their pride and splendour, yet broken by the windings of the defile, proceeded slowly to the gate of the citadel, which was fast shut. From behind the rocks above opened at once a fire of musquetry so close and murderous, that the unhappy chiefs gazed around in despair; they drew their sabres, and, as their coursers pranced wildly beneath their wounds, each Bey was heard to utter a wild shriek as he sank on the ground,—and in a short time all was hushed. Mahmoud heard

from his apartment in the citadel the tumult and outcries; and never were sounds more welcome to his ear. This massacre completely broke the power of the Mamelukes; on the loss of their chiefs the troops fled from Cairo.

A second piece of treachery of the same kind was afterwards executed by Ibrahim, the Pacha's eldest son: by the most solemn promises, he prevailed on these fugitives to descend from a mountain where they had taken refuge in Upper Egypt, and meet him on the plain. One of the Mamelukes, an uncommonly handsome young man, afterwards governor of Ramla in Palestine, told us the tale, during our audience of him, of that scene of murder and treachery, when, hemmed in on all sides by Ibrahim's numerous forces, after most of his comrades had fallen, he with a few more cut his way through the Turks, and escaped. The death of the Beys at Cairo, however cruelly achieved, was the only means of confirming the power of Mahmoud, which was continually disturbed by their plots and jealousies.

In one of the streets of this city daily stand

a large number of asses for hire: immediately on entering it, you are assailed and hemmed in by the keepers on every side, each recommending his own animal. They are handsome little creatures, of a quite different breed from those of Europe, with elegant saddles and bridles: some are of a pure white or black colour; and they are used by all ranks, and go at a rapid rate. You pay so much by the hour, and the Arab master, with a long stick in his hand, runs behind or beside you. It is amusing enough to gallop in this way through the crowded streets of Cairo; at one time avoiding, by the dexterity of the Arab, a tall camel, or a soldier mounted on a fine charger, at another jostling foot-passengers, or encountering numbers alike mounted with yourself, while the Arab attendant shows infinite dexterity in warding off obstacles, calling out loudly all the time to clear the way.

In the citadel is a celebrated well, which goes by the name of Joseph's Well; it is near three hundred feet deep, and thirty or forty in circumference. The descent to it is by a long

winding gallery, and you meet at every turning with men and cattle conveying the water upwards. The water is raised by means of large wheels, which are worked by buffaloes; it must have been a work of prodigious labour to execute, being all cut out, both gallery and well, from the solid rock. The hall of Joseph is also shown in the citadel, but in a ruinous state, and supported by several lofty columns of red granite: the granaries of the patriarch, where he deposited the Egyptians' corn, we could not see, as the Pacha had made storehouses of them.

The Consul-general gave me a letter to M. Caviglia, a Frenchman, who had resided some time at the Pyramids, where he was most ardently engaged in prosecuting discoveries. M. C. came to Cairo one day from his desert abode, and invited me warmly to return with him. We set out soon after two o'clock, the heat being intense. We crossed the Nile to the village of Gizeh. The direct route to the Pyramids is only ten miles; but the inundation made it near twenty, and obliged us to take a very circuitous course; yet it was a most agree-

able one, leading at times through woods of palm and date-trees, or over barren and sandy tracts, without a vestige of population. Fatigued with heat and thirst, we came to a few cottages in a palm-wood, and stopped to drink of a fountain of delicious water. In this northern climate no idea can be formed of the exquisite luxury of drinking in Egypt: little appetite for food is felt; but when, after crossing the burning sands, you reach the rich line of woods on the brink of the Nile, and pluck the fresh limes, and, mixing their juice with Egyptian sugar and the soft river-water, drink repeated bowls of lemonade, you feel that every other pleasure of the senses must yield to this. One then perceives the beauty and force of those similes in Scripture, where the sweetest emotions of the heart are compared to the assuaging of thirst in a sultry land.

The Nile, in its overflow, had encompassed many villages and their groups of trees, and was slowly gathering round cottage and grove and lonely palm. Its fantastic course was beautiful, for its bosom was covered with many

green isles of every possible form: here a hamlet seemed floating on the wave, above which hung the foliage and fruit of various trees, the stems being shrouded beneath; there it warred with the Desert, whose hills of sand, rocks, and ruins of temples, looked like so many mournful beacons in the watery waste. We passed several very long causeways, erected over the flat land to preserve a passage amidst the inundation; and the sun set as we entered on the long expanse of soft sand, in the midst of which the Pyramids are built. The red light resting for some time on their enormous sides, produced a fine effect: for a long while we seemed at no great distance from them, but the deception of their size on the flat expanse of the Desert long misled us, and it was dark before we arrived. As we drew near, we heard the loud voice of welcome from the Arabs, who came out of the apartments of the rock on which the Pyramids stand, and surrounded us. We ascended a narrow winding path to a long and low chamber in the rock, that had formerly been a tomb. Here M. Caviglia, his assistant M. Spinette, a Ger-

man, and myself, sat down on the floor, and supped on some boiled fowl and Nile water; and, being very much fatigued, they soon left me to my repose. One of the Arabs placed a small light in the wall of this antique abode, and, throwing myself on my hard bed of reeds, I tried to obtain some sleep; yet the novelty of my situation, the thought of being at last on the spot around which imagination had so long been passionately wandering, made it long a stranger to my eyes.

The next morning, at sunrise, we took our coffee at one of the natural windows of this cavern, that looked over the plain. My servant, who had followed the day before with the tent, lost his way, and did not arrive till midnight; and being unable to find either dwelling or inhabitant, he wandered about the Pyramids, shouting and firing his pistols, till at last he lay down in one of the deep holes in the sand, and sheltered himself till sunrise. In the course of the day we visited several of Mons. C.'s excavations; one was a small and beautiful gateway of fine white stone, covered with hieroglyphics,

and of so fresh a colour that it seemed but lately erected. Descending about sixty feet, we entered three subterraneous apartments, one of which contained two large coffins, side by side, cut out of the rock; some little idols only were found in them. There was also a very curious square room, or place of tombs, the walls covered with figures, discovered by Mr. Salt. M. Caviglia is at present engaged in what would be generally considered an almost hopeless undertaking: he believes there is a subterraneous communication between the Pyramids of Gizeh and those of Saccara and the remains of Memphis, the former fifteen miles off, the latter a few miles nearer. He is sanguine of success in his attempts to discover this passage, and has proceeded some hundred yards in his excavation of the sand: there is the work of years before him ere he can effect his object, though it is probable he will make some valuable discoveries by the way. A man must be animated by no slight enthusiasm to live in this place of desolation, deprived of all the joys of civilized life, toiling like a slave, with forty or fifty Arabs, from daybreak to sun-

set, amidst rocks, sands, and beneath burning heats. About two or three hundred yards from the great Pyramid is the Sphynx, with the features and breasts of a woman, and the body of an animal; between the paws an altar was formerly held; but the face is much mutilated:—its expression is evidently Nubian. This enormous figure is cut out of the solid rock, and is twenty-five or thirty feet in height, and about sixteen from the ear to the chin. The dimensions of the body cannot be ascertained, it being almost entirely covered with sand. The highest praise is due to M. Caviglia's indefatigable exertions to clear the sand from the breast and body of the Sphynx. This work employed him and his Arabs during six weeks: the labour was extreme, for the wind, which had set in that direction, blew the sand back again nearly as fast as they removed it: he is now proceeding to uncover the whole of the figure.

Evening now drew on, and the labour of the day being finished, we seated ourselves at a humble repast at the door of the place of tombs. The solitude that spread around was vast, and

the stillness unbroken: the Arabs had all retired to their homes in the distant villages: the Santon, who lived in a lofty tomb near by, was the only tenant of the Desert save ourselves, and his orisions were always silent:—in such a situation one hour of life is worth an age at home; it leaves recollections which no change or distance can impair or efface. The next morning I ascended the great Pyramid. The outside is formed of rough stones of a light yellow colour, which form unequal steps all round from the bottom to the summit: these stones or steps are two, three, or four feet high, and the ascent is rather laborious, but perfectly free from danger, or any serious difficulty. What a boundless and extraordinary prospect opened from the summit! On one side a fearful and melancholy Desert, either level or broken into wild and fantastic hills of sand and rocks; on the other, scenes of the utmost fertility and beauty marked the course of the Nile, that wound its way as far as the eye could reach into Upper Egypt; beneath, amidst the overflow of waters, appeared the numerous hamlets and groves encircled like so many beautiful islets;

and far in the distance was seen the smoke of Cairo, and its lofty minarets, with the dreary Mount Mokattam rising above. Who but would linger over such a scene; and, however wide he roamed, who would not feel hopeless of ever seeing it equalled!

The height of the great Pyramid is five hundred feet; its base about seven hundred feet long at each square, making a circumference of about three thousand feet; and its summit is twenty-eight feet square. It is perfectly true, as a celebrated traveller has observed, that you feel much disappointed at the first view of the Pyramids: as they stand in the midst of a flat and boundless Desert, and there is no elevation near, with which to contrast them, it is not easy to be aware of their real magnitude, until, after repeated visits and observations, their vast size fills the mind with astonishment.

On the third night, carrying lights with us, we entered the large Pyramid by a long gradual descent of near a hundred feet in length; and next ascended the long gallery of marble, a hundred and fifty feet in length, and excessively steep, which conducted us to the great chamber.

In the roof of this lofty room are stones of granite eighteen feet long: in what manner these masses were conveyed to such a situation it is not easy to conceive; still less for what purpose these immense structures were formed, filled up as the greater part of the interior is with masses of stones and marble. The few chambers hitherto discovered bear no proportion whatever to the vast extent of the interior. So immensely strong is their fabric, and so little do they appear injured by the lapse of more than three thousand years, that one cannot help believing, when gazing at them, that their duration can end only with that of the world.

The celebrated sarcophagus which Dr. C. fancifully supposed to have contained the bones of Joseph, stands in the great chamber; it has been much injured by the various pieces struck off. The Pyramid of Cephrenes, the passage into which Mr. Belzoni has opened, stands near that of Cheops, but cannot be ascended.

The Pyramids stand on a bed of rock a hundred and fifty feet above the Desert, and this elevation contributes to their being seen from

so great a distance. On one of the days of my stay here the wind blew so violently from morning to night, that the sand was raised, though not in clouds, yet in sufficient quantities to penetrate every thing, and render it difficult to stand against it: my tent, which was pitched in the plain below, was blown down, and I was obliged to take up my abode in the place of tombs. The large chamber excavated in the rock, and inhabited by Belzoni during his residence of six months here, is close to the Pyramid of Cephrenes; it is very commodious and lofty, though excessively warm. On entering the door, the only place through which the light is admitted, an immense number of bats rushed out against us. All the ruinous apartments and temples in this country are peopled with these animals, which Belzoni contrived to get rid of by lighting large fires, the smoke of which soon expelled them. We paid a visit one evening to the Arab Santon, or dervise, who lived in a handsome and spacious chamber, that was formerly perhaps a tomb, excavated out of the rock, not far from the

great Pyramid. He was an elderly man, of a mild and handsome countenance, and black beard. His wild and singular retreat was divided into two rooms: he was seated cross-legged in the outer one, and appeared engaged in meditation; but he instantly rose and requested us to allow him to make some coffee for us. Coffee made by a holy Santon, in a tomb that might have held the remains of kings, and close to the Pyramids! I shall never be offered such a privilege again in this state of mortality. What a pity that the Prophet never tasted coffee! A Turk may well regret this, as it undoubtedly would have had a place among the enjoyments in paradise for the faithful; for on earth, in sorrow and in joy, alone or in society, it appears their enduring luxury and consolation. The holy man seemed to have few enjoyments for the senses about him, yet he looked any thing but emaciated, and his dark eye was very expressive; and as we did not give him credit for being much of an antiquary, it was difficult to conceive why he should have wandered to this solitude. He must have been

sincere in his religion, as there was no population among which he could practise the arts and hypocrisy of the dervish tribe. The Arabs of the distant villages visited him occasionally, and brought some bread and vegetables for his subsistence.

Near the Pyramids is a small and singular group of trees, called the Sacred Trees by the Arabs, not one of whom will ever dare to pluck a leaf of them: they consist of two sycamores and two or three palms, and stand alone in the waste of sand; the leaves are not withered, but have a vivid green colour, and afford a most agreeable relief to the eye.

The last evening passed here was a very lovely one: I was seated with Caviglia near the door of his rocky abode, as the sun was going slowly down over the extensive scene before us, its red rays lingering on the Pyramids, the Desert, and its dreary precipices and wastes. Of all the sunsets I ever beheld, none are so beautiful as those of Egypt: a fierce redness, almost the colour of blood, is often thrown over the horizon, and then fades into

the most delicate hues of yellow, green, and azure. About a mile on the right, a small tribe of wandering Bedouins, who had just arrived, had pitched their tents: the camels were standing beside, the fires were lighted, and the Arab masters moving about in their wild and picturesque drapery—the only scene of life in that vast solitude. We were to set out at daybreak next morning on our return to Cairo; and, having taken leave of the Frenchman and his companion, I lay down for the last time on my bed of reeds in the tomb; but every effort to compose myself to sleep was useless:—a thousand agitating thoughts crowded into my mind; scenes of past life returned again, but clothed in dark and distorted colours, and my future journey seemed full of appalling difficulties and perils: the intense heat, and fatigue of the day, with the loneliness of my wild resting-place, and the warm exhalations the walls sent forth, might have caused this. I quitted my gloomy abode, and went into the open air: the desert plains, and the wide and gathering waters of the inundation, were bright with the most vivid

moonlight. How deeply interesting was that walk! The vast forms of the Pyramids rose clear and distinct, and, viewed from the plain of sand as they seemed to rest against the blue midnight sky, their appearance was, in truth, magnificent—those of Saccara might be seen twelve miles distant in the splendid light—and the silence around was so hushed and deep! Pursuing my way over the soft sand, I reached the nearest branch of the overflow; and the night being excessively warm, I bathed once more in the Nile, a luxury that well supplied the want of sleep.—The next morning we set out for Cairo. After quitting the barren tracts, the ride became very agreeable; the palm-trees were loaded with large clusters of dates. This fruit is manna to the people of Egypt, with whom it is an universal article of food: when ripe, it has a sweet and insipid taste; but when dried and preserved in lumps, after the stones are extracted, it is extremely good.

It is interesting to observe the different ways these people have of irrigating the land. Sometimes a buffalo is made to turn a large wheel

which is covered all round with a number of pitchers, into which the water being drawn up from beneath, is poured out again, as the wheel turns round, into a small channel cut in the earth, and this channel conveys it into various others through the fields. Or an Egyptian, half naked, stands all day long in the burning sun on the river's bank at a simple machine of wood, to the ends of which a couple of buckets are suspended; these he incessantly lowers into the stream, and then pours the water into the small canals cut in his ground. The inundation does not extend over the whole of the flat cultivated land, so that it is necessary, by these sluices and irrigations, to distribute the water everywhere. When the inundation has subsided and been absorbed in the earth, a rich black mould is left, which requires little labour. No plough is known here; but, a small furrow being made in the earth by a stick, the grain is dropped in, and the most abundant crop soon starts up, as if by magic. There are two harvests, one in March, the other in October.

In the way we met an Arab funeral: about

twenty men, friends of the deceased, advanced under a row of palm-trees, singing in a mournful tone, and bearing the body: they walked two or three abreast, with the priest at their head, and, having forded a stream in front, passed close to us. The corpse was that of a woman, neatly dressed in white, and borne on an open bier, with a small awning of red silk over it.

The market at Cairo, or place where the Circassian women may be purchased, cannot fail to be interesting, though at the same time repulsive to a stranger's feelings. These unfortunate women, as we term them, though it is a doubt if they think themselves so, are bought originally of their parents, who are generally peasants, by the Armenian and other merchants who travel through Georgia and Circassia. Their masters sometimes procure them an education, as far as music and singing go, give them handsome clothes, and then sell them in private to the rich Turks, or bring them to the market at Cairo, where, however, the business is conducted with tolerable decorum. The lady, veiled

and habited as best becomes her figure, and placed in a separate apartment, is attended by the merchant whose property she is, and may be seen by the person who wishes to become a purchaser. The veil is lifted, and the beauty stands exposed. This is better, however, than a Turkish wife, who, on the bridal evening, for the first time perhaps, draws aside the shroud of her charms, and throws herself into her husband's arms,—when he may recoil with horror from his own property, finding the dazzling loveliness he had anticipated changed into a plain, yellow, and faded aspect. But the Georgian style of beauty is rich and joyous; and their dark eyes!—there are no eyes like them in the world. The stranger then casts his sight over the figure, the hand and foot:—a small and delicate hand is, with the Orientals, much valued—even the men are proud of possessing it. He demands the lady's accomplishments; if she sings, or is skilled in music,—in this case the price is greatly enhanced: a thousand or fifteen hundred pounds are sometimes given for a very lovely woman so highly gifted.

One day, in company with another traveller, I paid a visit to a rich Jew, one of the first merchants in Cairo. He received us in a handsome apartment, to which a flight of steps ascended. The floor was covered with a rich carpet, and the divan, elevated a couple of feet higher, was lined with soft cushions, and laid out for luxurious enjoyment. A lofty dome of glass lighted the chamber. We reclined on the divan with the master of the house; and a few yards from us was another and more interesting party: six Oriental ladies, all unveiled and richly dressed, were at dinner, and seated in a circle on soft cushions on the floor round a low table about a foot high. The lady of the house, a handsome young woman, was just recovered from her confinement, and this was the first day of her receiving her friends. They ate and conversed much at their ease, and sent us some sweetmeats, and a pleasant drink like sherbet. The husband told us he and his bride were married at the age of fourteen; and they were then six and twenty, and had a houseful of children. Bismillah! blessings to the Prophet!

a Turk would have added, with a devout look; but, being a Jew, he invoked nobody, but looked very resigned about it. The ladies having finished their repast, each of them had a Turkish pipe, about five feet long, brought; and putting themselves into an easy posture, with the amber mouth-piece between their lips, and the ball of the pipe resting on the carpet, began to smoke, sip coffee, and chat at intervals. The custom of smoking in the East is very different from that in our country: the tobacco is so very mild and sweet, that it does no injury to the teeth or breath, and it is often used as a luxury by the women; and the tube of fine amber would not disfigure any lips; the attitude, when holding the long chibouque, or flexible argillée, displays to advantage a beautiful arm.

LETTER VI.

UPPER EGYPT.

HAVING hired a *cangia* for the voyage to Upper Egypt, we left Boulac on a beautiful evening in August. This vessel had very good accommodations—a low room on the deck with several windows, and a smaller one adjoining for my servant; but we preferred in general to take our meals under a canopy without. The crew consisted of seven Arab sailors, and their reis, or captain. For the first two or three days the shores and interior wore a more barren aspect than below Cairo, but the river became gradually wider. On the third day we came to Benesuef: at this town were barracks, with a number of Albanian troops, and it possessed a tolerable bazaar. As we advanced, our progress

became increasingly delightful. The vessel generally stopped every morning and evening at some village or hamlet, or where the aspect of the country promised an agreeable walk, when we went on shore to purchase milk or fruit, and vary the scene a little. In oriental climates a traveller possesses the invaluable advantage of being enabled to calculate with certainty on his progress; the sun by day, and the moon by night, will always light him brilliantly on his way; and he has little disappointment to anticipate from rains, fogs, and clouds; the atmosphere being almost always pure, the most distant objects can be distinctly seen. One evening, having walked some distance to an Arab village, in a grove of palms, we seated ourselves on the trunk of a tree as the daylight faded, when the Turkish commandant came up and politely invited us to take coffee with him. He conducted us to the top of a verdant bank, where a carpet was quickly spread at the door of his dwelling, sherbet was brought, and the time passed away very agreeably. He pressed us to dine with him the next day in the

Eastern style, but this would have occasioned too long a delay. It was rather singular, that this officer would not suffer his servant to accept any present; but, seeing us resolved to depart, he accompanied us a good part of the way on board, and then took a kind and obliging leave.

We next came to the town of Minièt, not so large as Benesuef; a Turk, of a respectable appearance, requested a passage as far as Siout, which we gave him. Late in the evening the cangia came to near the house of Mr. Brine. This gentleman, who is a native of Devonshire, and has its broad provincial dialect, manages a sugar-manufactory for the Pacha; he is very hospitable, and the English traveller is sure to meet a cordial reception at his house, which has an aspect half Egyptian, half English; the garden is laid out very prettily in the latter style. Next morning early we took coffee, and then proceeded to visit the premises, where between one and two hundred Arabs are constantly employed at very low wages; but Mr. B. declared it was often impossible to make

these Africans work without blows, though he greatly disliked having recourse to violent measures. Indulgence and kindness towards these people do indeed appear quite misplaced: they are certain to abuse them; and so rooted in the mind of almost every African is the love of ease and indolence, that they would rather subsist on the merest necessaries of life, than procure comforts by greater activity. We sat down to an early and profuse dinner at Mr. B.'s, and had the pleasure of partaking of what was rather rare on the banks of the Nile, a bottle of Champagne; and on returning on board we found two goats and a quantity of fowls sent as a present. This gentleman lives here on the fat of the land, and is absolute sovereign over all around him; but the uncertainty of earthly joys seemed to be felt in Egypt as at home, for on our return two months afterwards from Nubia, Mr. B. was dead, his companion, an Italian lady, was cast on the stream without a protector, the assistants and servants were turned off, and the

whole establishment put under Turkish management.

Leaving Radamouni, we arrived next day at Monfalut, an ancient town from the appearance of the wall that encircled it. Here was a very good bazaar, and, as usual, a number of Albanian troops. These men, remarkable for their fine and healthy appearance in their own country, seem to languish beneath this sultry climate, and become sallow and faded. Here we had an opportunity of witnessing the celebrated dance of the Almék girls, who abound in the towns in Upper Egypt, and are devoted to this profession from childhood by their parents, and dress in a gaudy and fantastic manner. They wear long rows of gold coins on each side of the head, which are attached to the tresses of the hair by means of a hole bored in the middle of the coin. They are often beautifully formed, but the features are in general plain, and a young woman of five-and-twenty always appears forty. They danced, five or six in number, to the sound of the tam-

bour and guitar, and their gestures were as voluptuous as can possibly be conceived; for in the manner and variety of these the whole skill of the dance appeared to consist: altogether it was a very disgusting exhibition.

Siout, the capital of the province, lying a few miles inland, we hired asses next day in order to visit it. Its appearance at a small distance was very pleasing, the branches of the Nile flowing close to it, and just beyond the rocky range of Libyan hills.

We next came to Girgé, a good Egyptian town, of the same sad and gloomy aspect as all the rest: the dwellings of the poor, dark and wretched; those of the better sort, like fortresses, with small and close windows of woodwork, and walls of a dirty brick colour; and the streets, if narrow passages can be so called, always unpaved. A Greek doctor came on board here, and introduced himself, as he wanted a passage for a short distance. He had come from Ibrahim the young Pacha's army at Sennaar, to procure a supply of spirits and some other articles, and was now about to return.

He was a true Greek, of a round supple form, and keen and cunning dark eyes, that could express all things to all men; and though the scorching deserts of Sennaar were not quite so sightly a home as his own Attica, he seemed very much at ease, and willing to take things as they came: he was quite a man of the world, and of very courteous manners. How he could satisfy his Christian conscience to remain with an army of infidels, whose only employment at Sennaar was to drive out and butcher the harmless inhabitants, is not easy to understand; but a Hakin, or Frank doctor, is held in peculiar honour by the faithful, whom it is very easy for him to remove to Paradise at any time; for medicine in any form or way they are always ready to gulp down, though in perfect health. The Greek accompanied me to visit some of the mosques in the town. It was the first day of the second bairam, and all the Turks and Egyptians were taking each other by the hand in the streets, and, having mutually kissed the cheek as brethren in the faith, they placed the right hand on the breast with an air of the ut-

most kindness and pleasure, and expressed their joy at the arrival of this happy day. It was a universal holiday: the Arabs, like boys released from school, formed in large groups in the open spaces, and danced and sang with all their might.

We next visited the Coptic convent, a lofty and gloomy building of brick, with only one father in it. He was a man about forty, of a mild and handsome countenance and amiable manners, and appeared sincerely pious; he was unmarried, and, no being but himself residing in this large and silent convent, his life must have been rather lone and desolate. He had a little garden of plants on the terraced roof of his house, the care of which seemed to be his chief delight, and he was supported by the contributions of his people, who were about three hundred in number. Had the Prophet forbidden his ministers to marry, he would have lacked imauns, santons, and dervishes, and might have propagated his faith by fire and sword, but never by the word of man; for not the certainty of Paradise would ever induce a believer to live a life of celibacy.

The banks of the Nile on the opposite shore were here formed of precipices of immense height, which descended almost perpendicularly into the water. The next day, our companion, the Greek doctor, left us, and proceeded to Furshout; and in the evening we reached the town of Kenéh, where excellent limes and melons were in abundance. The price of provisions in this country is extremely low—eggs twenty for a penny, a fowl for three-pence, and bread and vegetables cost a mere trifle. The thermometer was here at 93 in the shade, but in a few days it rose to 100. At this town we met with an amusing Turkish barber. This class of men are more respectable in the East than with us, which may partly account for their frequent introduction among the characters in the Arabian Nights. He was a clever man, and seemed to know the world well; his features were handsome, and, besides being well-dressed, he wore a formidable pair of pistols in his sash. He belonged to a peculiar order of dervishes, who allowed their hair to grow. Outwardly he looked as shorn as the

rest of the faithful, but, on taking off his turban, his long and luxuriant raven tresses fell on his shoulders and breast: he seemed to sneer at many parts of his Prophet's revelations, and said he believed that people of all religions would have an equal chance of going to Heaven. This sceptical dervish was a jovial fellow, and loved an inspiring glass, even with giaours; he wore several dashing rings, and took snuff with all the grace of a Frenchman. On our return from Upper Egypt some time afterwards, the cangia had not long touched the shore, when we saw the portly figure of our friend the dervish advancing over the sand; he carried a handsome walking-stick, and hailed our arrival very cordially.

We set out in the afternoon to visit the Temple of Tentyra, about two miles from the opposite shore; it is situated at the end of a very fine plain, on which is here and there scattered a lonely group of palms. This beautiful temple is in a higher state of preservation than almost any other in Egypt: it is the first a traveller visits, and its extreme grandeur and ele-

gance excite surprise and admiration beyond what is felt amidst any other ruin. The portico consists of twenty-four columns of fine white stone, each twenty-three feet in circumference. Marble is rarely to be found in the Egyptian edifices, the materials of which they are composed being generally a fine white or light yellow stone, or coarse granite. But it is on the porticoes of the temples that the exquisite skill of the architect, and the richest ornaments, have been chiefly bestowed. The ceiling is divided into several compartments, among the innumerable figures of which (objects of Egyptian worship) are the sacred vulture, serpents, processions of boats, whose passengers have hawks, rams, or lions' heads, with head-dresses. The first chamber you enter is lofty, and supported by six pillars of the same kind as those of the portico. The beautiful zodiac on the ceiling of one of the inner apartments has been taken off entirely by the French, and carried to Paris. The outer wall of the temple is seven feet in thickness, and secured by fastenings of iron; and the stones which compose the architrave

of the portico are more than eighteen feet in length.

The hieroglyphics on the ceiling are painted with various colours, which still partially remain; the signs of the zodiac are here the prevailing ornament. You pass afterwards into an inner apartment, supported by rows of pillars, and at the end of this is the door of the sanctuary, over which is the device seen in every temple—that of outspread wings, or plumes, and rays of light descending, as of the glory of Divinity. Having lighted a torch, you pass from the sanctuary through several chambers and passages of the interior of the temple; the walls covered with hieroglyphics of the most exquisite workmanship, half the human size, and cut two or three inches in prominence from the walls. But the body of the temple is partly buried in the earth. In the grand portico a great deal of rubbish remains, the lower part of many of the pillars being covered, probably, to the depth of several yards. It was a glorious site for a temple: the wide plain in front, which is now covered with a rank and luxuriant

verdure; close behind, the eternal barriers of the Libyan mountains; the Nile a mile and a half on the right; and the boundless desert on the left. The traveller in this country is often struck with the magnificence of the situations the Egyptians chose for their temples.

Near the temple is a small building of a pyramidal form, which appears to have been a place of burial: you stoop to enter the low and narrow door, and the light is admitted through a small rude dome at top; many corpses must have rested here, for it still retained a death-like smell.

About a hundred yards to the left of the great temple are the remains of a smaller one; the figures cut in the walls here exceed those of the former; the foliage of the capitals being carved with exquisite beauty. The figure of the evil genius Typhon, ugly and deformed, is carved on each of the pillars.

The inundation of the Nile had this year fallen much below its usual limits; most anxiously did the poor Egyptians watch the rise of the waters, inch after inch, till they came to a

full stand. Twenty-five years ago a similar event happened, in a greater deficiency than the present, which was productive of great distress, owing to the scarcity of the crops. They fear for their harvests now, and the peasants labour with daily and nightly toil to make amends for the deficient overflow, by raising the water by every possible device, to pour it on their lands. As we advance higher into the country, the surface of the stream is often several inches below the level of the shore. This evening a group of Arab boys came to the river-side, and kept up a sort of singing in chorus for some time, which was more melodious than most of their efforts of this kind; then a man mounted on horseback, and dressed fantastically to personate a fool, advanced, attended by a number of Arabs on foot, whom he diverted by a variety of ludicrous gestures. This procession paraded about for some time, with much shouting and clapping of hands; and was, we understood, an ancient custom, to propitiate the waters of the Nile, that they might rise to their usual level.

The town of Keneh is the most commercial in Upper Egypt. Numerous caravans arrive here from the Red Sea, by way of Cossair, and bring Mocha coffee, the shawls and spices of India, and various other articles; and carry back corn, sugar, honey, and oil. The bazaars are not so good as in many of the other towns; but the market for meat is everywhere indifferent. A butcher who is about to cut up a sheep is quickly surrounded by customers, who direct him to separate the part of the animal they like, and in a short time it all disappears.—The women of pleasure of various nations and colours, are met with in every street, in this place, and are adorned with strings of gold coins on each side the face, rings in their noses, or heavy bracelets on their wrists, each after her own taste. At evening we frequently heard the sounds of music and dancing from the houses where they were assembled with the Albanian soldiers or the merchants. Two or three times several of them came to the river-side, and set up a sort of song or dirge,

with clapping of hands, the effect of which was not likely to entice any hapless traveller ashore.

We left Kenéh with a fair breeze about nine o'clock at night, and were becalmed the greatest part of the next day near a pleasant village, luxuriantly shaded. In the middle of most of the villages, there are generally one or more large spreading trees, mostly sycamores, which afford a shade sufficient for a number of people; beneath these the Arabs love to sit, passing their hours indolently away with conversation and the everlasting pipe. The soil beneath is often nothing but a mass of thick dust or light earth, without any verdure; here they sit and recline with great content, when a little exertion of watering might procure a green and verdant couch. The patriarchs of the village, with their long beards, were all enjoying themselves in the shade of some beautiful trees at the river's side. There was not a breath of wind, and the heat was too powerful for our Arab sailors to walk on the beach, and pull the cangia along by a rope, which is the common

practice in a calm. We resolved, however, to go and see what is supposed to be the site of Coptos, where some widely scattered ruins are still to be seen; and having hired a boat, we crossed over, as it was a few miles' walk from the opposite shore. Amidst large and confused heaps of rubbish, are some remains of walls, a few feet high, and fragments of pillars of fine granite. On our return, we passed through a village on the declivity of a hill, and stepped into its large mosque. The hour of evening prayers was just begun; and the peasants of the neighbourhood, many of them fine-looking men, others venerable with age, were gathering fast to their devotions. The corridor was supported by lofty pillars, among which were two or three fine ones of granite, which they had actually taken in pieces from the ruins of Coptos to support their house of faith. In a small building adjoining were several small reservoirs of water, cool and shaded, where the believers were carefully and devoutly washing their feet before they entered the mosque. In this climate their manner of worshipping has often a

very impressive as well as picturesque effect. Just after sunset, when the last and loveliest hues are cast over the silent Egyptian scenery, or more often when the moon has spread her brilliant light on the river and shore, the Turks and Arabs come to the water's edge, and, heedless of the traveller beside them, spread their cloak on the bank, and turning their face to Mecca, and alternately kneeling and standing, are for some time entirely absorbed in their devotions, apparently actuated by a deep and solemn sense of the duty they are engaged in.

At the village of Koft a funeral passed by as we stood near the mosque; the burial-ground was on the side of a hill, shaded by palms, and commanded an extensive view of the surrounding country. The tombs were all of one form, low, a few feet in length, and plastered white. There was no outcry on this occasion, or funeral wail, as it was a child who had died; when an Arab had partly covered the corpse, each of the relatives pushed the earth gently with his hands into the grave, continually repeating some Arab words, signifying "Be thou happy!"

Although there is a sameness in the character of the Egyptian scenery, it is such as is to be seen in no other land. The Libyan and Arabian chains of mountains, perfectly naked, stretch on each side of the Nile nearly to the first cataract, generally within a few miles of the river, and sometimes close to it, or forming its bank. At the foot of these naked masses of a light colour, often appear groups of the most vivid and beautiful verdure, the palm and sycamore spreading over some lonely cottage, a herd of goats and buffaloes winding their way, or a camel silently grazing. The utter barrenness and desolation that often encompass scenes and spots of exquisite fruitfulness and beauty, the tomb of the santon with its scanty shade, and the white minaret with its palm and cypress placed on the very verge of a boundless desert, or amidst a burning expanse of sand, are almost peculiar to Egypt. Then you often pass from the rich banks of the Nile, covered with lime and orange-trees, where groups of Orientals are seated luxuriously in the shade, into a wild and howling waste, where

all, even the broken monuments of past ages, only inspires feelings of sadness and regret.

It was evening ere we arrived at Luxor, a poor yet populous village, erected partly amidst the ruins of the great temple. This edifice is near the water's edge, and its lofty yellow pillars, each thirty feet in circumference, and ranged in long colonnades, instantly arrest the attention. On landing, we found on the sand a dozen grim Egyptian statues, large as life, cut in coarse granite, after the fashion of the great Memnon, and in a sitting posture, close to the edge of the water, that rippled at their feet. The weight of each statue was enormous, and would render the removal difficult; or else a traveller might well be tempted to ship one of them, as they seemed to be no man's property. There are two most beautiful obelisks fronting the gateway, seventy feet high, but in reality much loftier, as a considerable part is buried in rubbish. Their hieroglyphics are cut deeper, and with greater delicacy, than those on any other obelisks in Egypt. A Frenchman, in the employment of Drouetti the consul, resided

here, who showed us much politeness, he was an intelligent man, dressed in the Arab costume, and had resided sixteen years in various parts of this country. His companion, Moris Bonnet, had gone to Cairo for a supply of wine and other comforts, and he felt solitary and impatient for his return: he possessed a small collection of minerals and other curiosities, and had manufactured a cool delightful sort of palm-wine out of the juice of the tree, which was very grateful to us in the sultry heat of the day. Sixteen years' residence in Upper Egypt is really a trial of a man's patience and enthusiasm, and above all beings for two Frenchmen. Suleiman Aga, commander of the Pacha's Mamelukes at Esnéh, a town two days' sail farther, was not so resigned: this man was one of Bonaparte's colonels, and on the ruin of his master's fortunes came to Egypt, and offered his services to the Pacha, protesting at the same time he would never consent to change his religion. Mahmoud laughed, and said, he cared nothing about his religion, if he only served him well; but he must allow himself to be

called by a Turkish name, and wear the costume. Suleiman Aga now lives in style as commandant at Esnéh, and receives travellers very hospitably; but his soul pines, amidst Egyptian beauty, for a suitable companion, and he implored a fellow-traveller and friend of mine to send him out an English or Italian wife; he swore he would pay implicit deference to his friend's advice, and marry the lady the moment she arrived. The women around him, he said, were so insipid; and he should live there contented could he be but blessed with one whom he could converse with, and whose vivacity and intelligence would brighten his solitary hours.

It is difficult to describe the noble and stupendous ruins of Thebes. Beyond all others they give you the idea of a ruined, yet imperishable city; so vast is their extent, that you wander a long time confused and perplexed, and discover at every step some new object of interest. From the temple of Luxor to that of Karnac the distance is a mile and a half, and they were formerly connected by a long avenue

of sphynxes, the mutilated remains of which, the heads being broken off the greater part, still line the whole path. Arrived at the end of this avenue, you come to a lofty gateway of granite, and quite isolated. About fifty yards farther you enter a temple of inferior dimensions, which Drouetti has been busy in excavating; you then advance into a spacious area, strewed with broken pillars, and surrounded with vast and lofty masses of ruins,—all parts of the great temple: a little on your right is the magnificent portico of Karnac, the vivid remembrance of which will never leave him who has once gazed on it. Its numerous colonnades of pillars, of gigantic form and height, are in excellent preservation, but without ornament; the ceiling and walls of the portico are gone; the ornamented plat-stone still connects one of the rows of pillars with a slender remain of the edifice attached to it. Passing hence, you wander amidst obelisks, porticoes, and statues; the latter without grace or beauty, but of a most colossal kind. If you ascend one of the hills of rubbish, and look around, you see a gateway

standing afar, conducting only to solitude,—and detached and roofless pillars, while others lie broken at their feet, the busts of gigantic statues appearing above the earth, while the rest of the body is yet buried, or the head torn away.

The length of the great temple of Karnac is estimated at 1200 feet, and its breadth at 400; and among its hundred and fifty columns are two rows, each pillar of which is ten feet in diameter. On the left spread the dreary deserts of the Thebais, to the edge of which the city extends. In front is a pointed and barren range of mountains. The Nile flows at the foot of the temple of Luxor; but the ruins extend far on the other side of the river, to the very feet of those formidable precipices, and into the wastes of sand. The natural scenery around Thebes is as fine as can possibly be conceived. The remainder of the statue is still here, the beautiful bust of which Belzoni sent to the British Museum; it was fallen and broken off long since. Drouetti is quite inexcusable in having caused one of the two beautiful obelisks

at the entrance of the temple of Karnac to be thrown down and broken, that he might carry off the upper part: such an act is absolute sacrilege.

One cannot help imagining that a vast deal yet remains to be discovered beneath this world of ruins, on both sides of the river; but the pursuit requires incessant and undivided attention. A traveller must lay his account to spend six months in excavating here, with a body of Arabs, who work very cheaply, and must put up with many privations, before he could expect to be richly compensated for his pains.

The second visit we paid to Karnac was still more interesting. The moon had risen, and we passed through one or two Arab villages in the way, where fires were lighted in the open air, and the men, after the labours of the day, were seated in groups round them, smoking and conversing with great cheerfulness. It is singular that in the most burning climates of the East the inhabitants always love a good fire at night, and a traveller soon catches the habit; yet the

air was still very warm. There was no fear of interruption in exploring the ruins, for the Arabs dread to come here after daylight, as they often say these places were built by Afrit, the devil; and the belief in apparitions prevails among most of the Orientals. We again entered with delight the grand portico. It was a night of uncommon beauty, without a breath of wind stirring, and the moonlight fell vividly on some parts of the colonnades, while others were shaded so as to add to, rather than diminish their grandeur. The obelisks, the statues, the lonely columns on the plain without, threw their long shadows on the mass of ruins around them, and the scene was, in truth, exquisitely mournful and beautiful.

LETTER VII.

UPPER EGYPT.

THE next day we crossed to the opposite shore to visit the Memnonium. The hieroglyphics there are all of a warlike character; the columns are plain and without any ornament; the capitals perfectly simple, and bear a greater resemblance to the Doric than to any other order, and are the same as those of Karnac and Luxor. The front of many of the columns is formed into statues of Osiris, near thirty feet high, with the hands folded on the breast; but the features are defaced. Close to Kurnu lie the fragments of an enormous statue. The bust is thirty-five feet in length, the width of the shoulders twenty-five feet, and the whole must have been nearly eighty feet high. It

consisted of one solid piece of granite. It has fallen on its face, and the features are quite obliterated ; its thickness is prodigious.

About a mile and a half distant are the ruins of Medinet Abou, apparently those of a temple and palace, which are entered by a small and very handsome gateway. The portico of the former conducts to a large square, round the sides of which run lofty corridors ; the capitals of the pillars are highly ornamented, and the ceiling they support richly painted. The various bas-reliefs cut on it still preserve their vivid colours, which are most frequently of a light blue and red. The ruined palace is peculiarly fresh and gay, just that of a court, as if time had in pity spared it for its elegance. The length of the temple is near five hundred feet ; but the interior is much obscured by rubbish, and its general aspect has none of the grandeur of Luxor and Karnac. Seated on the shores of the Nile, Medinet Abou must once have possessed its cool retreats, its fountains, and woods of perpetual green ; but the face of Nature is perfectly desolate now, and though,

after the lapse of so many centuries, it is still beautiful within, every sign of vegetation has perished without, and it is completely enveloped in a frightful waste.

We proceeded along the loose sand, and wound up between the hills; the weather was very sultry. The burial-place of ancient Thebes is situated here, and innumerable graves and vaults are seen scattered over this part of the desert, even to the foot of the precipices. The mummies have been drawn from their tombs with a rapacious and unsparing hand. In this vast cemetery there were no objects such as we expect to see around the remains of the dead, but a waste of bright and scorching sand, amidst black and naked rocks. The corpses of the poor Egyptians had most of them been torn from their deep graves and strong vaults; many of the latter, to which flights of steps led, after being rifled, had their doors secured, till another visit might produce fresh discoveries; others were entirely empty and spoiled. The chief part of this havoc was committed by the Arabs, who tore the bodies open to get at the

resin used in the embalming, which they sold at Cairo at a high price; but travellers and *savans*, and their agents, have also had their share in this sacrilege, if so it may be called. It is a sad and disgusting sight; the sands and the edges of the graves in some parts being strewed with the bones and pieces of the flesh of the mummies, thrown wantonly about. The poor Egyptians, who had slept in peace for some thousands of years, have been mercilessly dealt with here, and the remains of warriors, citizens, and sages, may now lie mingled together beneath the burning sun; for no retreat or sanctuary of the dead has been suffered to remain inviolate. I picked up a foot with part of the leg, that from its smallness and delicacy seemed to have belonged to an Egyptian lady. It had suffered little from time, except being shrunk in size, for the flesh, though quite dried, still adhered to it: but it strongly retained the mummy smell.

Not far from hence, in the plain below, are the two colossal statues of Memnon: one is cut out of a solid block of granite; the other is

composed of several pieces. They are in a sitting posture, near sixty feet in height, and can be seen from a great distance round. The architecture is coarse; the posture easy and tranquil, with their gigantic hands placed on their knees. At this time the inundation had gathered round these enormous statues to some extent, and invaded a part of their stone chair or seat: their appearance, thus isolated, was most strange,—they seemed to sit like the stern and ancient genii of the plain, over whom time and decay had no power.

The Nile for the last few days had grown narrower, and its banks more wild and rugged; the climate seemed to become more pure as we advanced. The heat at Esnéh, where we arrived on the second day, was very intense,—indeed it would have been difficult to have borne it, but for the luxury of bathing twice a-day in the Nile, at sunrise and sunset. The ruin of the temple is situated in the middle of the town, and its portico, the most beautiful and best preserved in Egypt, is obscured by a mass of rubbish: it is situated near the market-place. The

capitals of the pillars are mostly different from each other, and this variety, as in the portico of Etfu, has a delightful effect: they are taken from the leaves, flowers, and stems of plants and trees, as the vine, the lotus, and the palm-tree.

In the progress towards the cataracts, we observed the colour of the inhabitants of the villages became gradually darker, till at last it became quite black.

At length we reached Etfu, or Apollinopolis Magna. Its temple is a noble ruin of vast extent, and commands a most extensive view of the river and the plains above and below; the piers of the gateway are eighty-five feet in height, and the length of the outer wall of the temple is near four hundred and twenty feet. You enter into an immense area, round which runs a lofty corridor, supported by a single row of pillars, and at the end is the portico, with three rows of columns: the capitals of the pillars like those of the temple of Esnéh. This great and magnificent temple is in an excellent state of preservation. The villagers have built

a number of wretched cottages in the courts and on the roof of the edifice; a multitude of people were at work beneath the corridors, and the noise of their operations resounded through every part of the building. The miserable huts and their squalid inhabitants haunting your sight at every avenue of this splendid ruin, sadly injured its effect. One could not help earnestly wishing that, like Thebes and Tentyra, it stood in some deep and desert solitude, where the foot of man seldom approached.

The next village we came to was sweetly situated in a grove of palms, and its small gardens looked very neat and inviting. Here we met with a Greek, who had wandered to a great distance, and seemed to live by his wits. He had with him a young Abyssinian girl, who had not long left her own country, purchased, no doubt, by this man for himself first, probably, and afterwards for sale. She was seated beneath one of the trees; and was of a dark complexion, but was not pretty, as her countrywomen are so often said to be.

Landing early one morning, we strolled to a

Coptic village, and found the people remarkably civil. The old Sheik was very importunate with us to enter his dwelling, and partake of a repast; and the chief part of the population crowded round, among whom were a few of the prettiest women we had seen in Egypt. The very early marriages sadly impair their attractions; and, joined with exposure to the burning sun, make them look haggard at thirty. At one place there was a young girl of twelve years of age, married however, and carrying her child in her arms. Such is the force of custom, that even in the most remote situations, where no looks but those of their neighbours are likely to meet them, you see the peasant women come to the Nile for water, with their features rigidly concealed, being all, except the eyes, covered with a thick veil.

The next town we reached was Essouan, around which are scattered the ruins, uninteresting however, of the ancient town of Syené; they stand on the steep banks of the river, in some parts in the form of the ruined turrets of a castle. In the afternoon we crossed to the

island of Elephantine. The vivid descriptions given by Denon of this island are a little overcharged. It is a very enchanting spot, about a mile in length, and near a quarter of a mile broad; the northern part of it is a desert in miniature, all rocks and barrenness, with the fine ruin of a small temple on its most conspicuous point: the rest is covered with gardens, cottages, and groves of palm and fruit trees, even to the water's edge. A man who has never toiled through long and burning deserts can have little idea of the rapture with which a group of trees, or a bright spot of verdure, is hailed; or of the deep luxury of feeling excited by again moving among cottages, and fountains, and cool retreats. The land of Palestine was, no doubt, beautiful and rich; but the ecstasy the Israelites felt on beholding and entering it, and the glowing language used in describing it, had their origin as much, perhaps, in the passage through the dreary and howling wilderness, as in the attractions of the scenes themselves.

The next morning we rode to the Isle of

Philœ. The way was through a perfect desert of sand and rocks; the latter piled in huge and lofty masses. About half-way was a fountain of water, covered by a lofty arch of brick from the rays of the sun. Beneath this two poor women were sitting, who offered us water in the hope of a trifling reward. A few miles farther on, we came to the shore, opposite the Isle of Philœ, and, having procured a boat, crossed over. It is a branch of the Nile, which here makes a circuit, as if on purpose to encompass this singular spot. Not half so large as Elephantine, it has no verdure, except a few scattered palm-trees at the water's edge, but its rocky and romantic surface is completely covered with superb ruins. They consist of the remains of several temples: one only of which is in a good state of preservation. There are two lofty gateways, and the pillars of one of the corridors have the same capitals as those of Tentyra,—the head of Isis. The family of an Arab inhabited some of the chambers of the temple. He was very savage when he perceived our intention of penetrating into his harem, and drew

his long knife, protesting he would revenge the attempt. At every step you tread on some fragment of antiquity; for this celebrated isle must once have been holy ground, and peculiarly devoted to religious retirement. No situation could be better adapted to such a purpose,—encircled by a branch of the Nile, and imprisoned on every side by utter desolation. The desert spreads its wastes and mountains in front; the dark and fantastic cliffs of the adjacent isles and shores look as if rent by some convulsion, and, viewed through the long colonnades which crown the rocks even to the water's edge, the effect is quite panoramic. Then the loneliness and stillness of every thing around, only interrupted by the distant rush of the cataracts; and a climate perpetually pure, that gives even to the nights a bewitching softness and splendour. Whoever is sick of the world, and would hold communion only with Nature and past ages, let him go and take up his abode at Philœ.

The boat we had hired was rowed by two boys to the adjacent isle, when a native, perfectly black, who turned out to be a complete

character, demanded, with an appearance of great anger, to be taken on board. His object was to share in the present usually given, and he afforded us infinite diversion. His features, like those of the rest of his countrymen, were singularly expressive and animated. An aquiline nose; eyes full of lustre, the every look of which expressed his meaning better than words; —his hair was divided into thick tresses, and his frame, full of activity and muscle, had scarcely any flesh; he was quite black. His looks and gestures were a complete pantomime, and he sang a livelier boat-song than we had been used to; for the Arabs have all a monotonous chant, with which they keep time to their oars. On setting off on our return, we were surrounded by a small host, importuning for a bakshish, or present. The acting of our Bereber friend was admirable. He endeavoured to intimidate some from applying, exerted his voice the loudest, and kept his keen comic face in the foremost rank, though he had received more than any of the others.

The ride to Essouan through the desert was

very pleasant, it being near sunset; and to bathe in the Nile afterwards, how exquisite a pleasure! the intense heat being past, the evening air was as balm to the feeling, cool and soft, without being chill. The next day we directed the cangia to remain at Elephantine: the isle afforded a delightful retirement, which was indeed as a home and a shadow in a weary land. How often have I wandered amidst its shades during the burning heat of the day! There was a favourite spot where a group of trees stood near the water's edge, apart from the cottages; on the opposite shore rose a lofty range of sand-hills, and the channel between was broken by some fine rocks, and one little isle covered with verdure, on which stood one or two habitations; on the left were the ruins of the two island temples:—it was delightful to sit for hours here, and see the sun go down on the romantic and beautiful scenery.

The Cataracts, a few miles above Essouan, are very insignificant, the fall over a ledge of rocks, extending nearly the whole breadth of the channel, being but a few inches in height,

though the noise may be heard at some distance. This being the termination of our voyage, the next morning we went down with the current at a good rate, and soon reached Esnéh, and then Luxor. At the former town there are some hundreds of Mamelukes in the service of the Pacha, to whom they are slaves, being Circassians and others purchased by him when very young They are still, for the most part, men in their youth, handsomely dressed, and are commanded by Suleiman Aga, the *quondam* French colonel, by whom they are disciplined in the European manner.

One day, being becalmed near the opposite shore on our return, we landed at the entrance of a little valley, confined by lofty precipices. Advancing up this romantic spot, we came to a small monastery, with its cemetery in the wild. The gate was closed, and, no answer being given to the repeated calls, we entered through one of the windows, and found all its apartments silent and deserted. They must have been so for some time. In the burial-ground were many tomb-stones with inscriptions, in memory of the

fathers who had lived and died in this solitude, which seemed not to be intruded on by human footsteps, save when some chance traveller should direct his wayward steps there. A self-denying place it was altogether for this little community of fathers, who might truly say they had nothing to do with the pleasures of the world.

Returning to Thebes, we set out early in the morning on a visit to the Tombs of the Kings, and, passing again near the ruins of Kurnu, sought the house of Osmin, an Arab, who keeps the keys. Having waited two hours, till he arrived, he soon set before us a couple of fowls, and some cakes of bread, spread on a mat in the open air, as we had a fatiguing walk before us. The path was first across the sand, and then a continual and tedious ascent up the mountains, till it approached the place of the sepulchres. They are situated in a kind of amphitheatre formed by naked and pointed summits of the mountains: in the middle of this is a steep descent or chasm, and at its bottom are the entrances of these abodes of the dead. Descending a flight of steps, the door of the largest

tomb was opened, and the passage, by a slight descent, conducted into the various chambers. The surprise and delight felt at viewing these wonderful cemeteries can hardly be expressed; there is no spectacle in the world, perhaps, like that which they afford. The chambers are fourteen in number, hewn out of the solid rock; and the walls and ceilings are covered with bas-reliefs, in the highest state of perfection, which is owing partly to their having been carefully preserved from injury and from the external air. The painting looks as fresh as if laid on but a few years ago. The figures, finely and deeply cut in the rock, are of various colours, some of a light and deep blue, yellow, or red, with a mixture of white: they are in some parts diminutive; in others, three or four feet in height. These groups of figures represent sometimes the progress of the arts or the productions of agriculture; in one part you see a long religious procession, in another a monarch sitting on his throne, dressed in his splendid attire, and giving audience to his subjects; or a spectacle of death, where a corpse is laid out on the bier attended

by mourners: various animals also, as large as life, and a number of serpents, the different hues and folds of the body of which are beautifully executed, in particular one of a large size of the Boa Constrictor. The features of the women, in these representations, bear a close resemblance to those of Modern Egypt; the face oval, the complexion rather dark, the lips full, the expression soft and gentle, and altogether African. In some of the chambers the sculptures on the walls and ceilings are only partially executed, the work being evidently left in an unfinished state. The ambition of a monarch to eternize his memory, or preserve his remains untouched, never could have chosen a more suitable or more wildly impressive situation.

Leaving Thebes the same night, the next place of any consequence we stopped at was Kenéh, passing by in the way a long encampment of Turkish troops, who were on their march to join Ibrahim Pacha, Ali's eldest son, at Sennaar. There were several renegades attached to the Pacha's army; among others, a young American of some talents and good family, who

came to Egypt, turned Mahometan, and got an appointment in the Pacha's army, but was soon disgusted with a campaign in the desert of Sennaar. He quitted the camp in company with a Scotchman, a soldier in the same army, and after a painful journey arrived at Cairo. At the time I knew him there, he had an appointment as a writer in some way under the Pacha, with a small sallary. He should have made a pilgrimage to Mecca, the only object almost worth turning Mahometan for. If to indulge in Turkish voluptuousness was his aim, he was not rich enough, for it requires means in Egypt as well as in Europe to live a life of pleasure. But at Cairo he was often in company with a missionary for the conversion of the Jews, and an excellent man, whose discourses made him perceive the folly of Mahometanism, though he had written a treatise in defence of it. He became extremely penitent, was conveyed down the Nile secretly to Alexandria, and on reaching Europe, was received once more into the bosom of Christianity. His companion, the Scotchman, was more unfortunate: he went about the

streets of Cairo with little on him except a blanket, and sometimes came to me for relief. "I can make it badly out, Sir," said he to me one day, "among the Turks: I shall turn Christian again."

In the way to Girgé the wind became violent for one or two days, and obliged the vessel to stop. One afternoon, in order to pass the time, I took a walk to a village at some distance, and seating myself beneath a palm, took out a volume of the Arabian Nights to read. After some time two Arabs came up, and sat down beside me. The book was beyond their comprehension, save that a figure of a beautiful Eastern princess in the frontispiece interested them wonderfully. One of them, an old fellow with a beard, made the most expressive signs of admiration, while his eyes sparkled with pleasure. They invited me to enter the village; where, being seated on the floor of a cottage, they set dates and milk before me, and a number of women gathered before the door out of curiosity. The custom they have of concealing a good part of their faces is a very

laudable one: considering the number of fine-looking men among the Arabs, it is strange there should be such an almost universal plainness among the other sex in Egypt.

A little naked boy came into the hut: he seemed to be a great favourite, being a Marabey; that is, dedicated from his infancy to be a fakir, or Arab priest. The little dog looked very round and fat, and was, I believe, covered over with oil. All at once the sounds of music were heard without, and a strange group made its appearance. A boy carried a flag of red and white, a tall respectable-looking Arab played a tambourine, a young man a long drum, and another a pair of castanets. They all sang in a low voice; and in the midst was a fakir, for whom all the display was made. He was a very good-looking man, with a full florid face, a black bushy beard, and his thick hair in wild disorder. He moved his head up and down strangely in time to the music, and joined in the chant with the others. He came into the hut where I was, and behaved with

great ease and civility; and seemed more a man of the world than a self-denying saint.

The figure of the beautiful woman in the book, which the two Arabs had kissed with earnestness, the fakir seemed to view with dislike, as the Koran forbids a fondness for pictures. The Prophet was right, perhaps, in prohibiting the use of pictures or images to his people; the wretched paintings of the Virgin, and the saints, male and female, in the Greek church, may have quite as much effect on the imagination, if it can be at all excited by such things, as the vile statues of the Catholics. The only human figure I saw in Greece that was better worth worshipping, if I may be allowed the expression, than half their marvellous calendar, was a young Greek girl at Tripolitza. She was dying—but her figure was symmetry itself. Her father was a priest, and her mother was, as she was well termed, a magnificent woman, of large size, stout, and her features had a noble and imperial character,—quite unlike her daughter, who was of the

smallest size in which loveliness could well inhabit. The girl was laid in the corridor to breathe the fresh air. She did not speak; but her elegant yet emaciated limbs, but ill concealed by the loose drapery, were moved at times in agony, while a hurried ejaculation escaped her, and her face was buried in the long tresses of her beautiful hair. Never does a woman arrest every feeling so irresistibly as in hopeless sorrow and anguish. If experience among both the unhappy Greeks and Turks could confirm this, it were easy to appeal to it. I have heard the lament of a mother over all her murdered family; of a widow for her husband torn from her arms and slain; the parting of a lady from her son, whose father lay covered with wounds. But in the touching and impassioned expression of grief the Christian must yield to the Ottoman:—the men feel intensely and suffer silently; and the Turkish women—there is the very soul of sorrow there, and of tenderness.

LETTER VIII.

EGYPT.

We arrived at the town of Aboutigé early in the morning. A funeral procession of the Arabs took place here: first walked a number of men, three or four abreast, at a slow pace, singing in a mournful voice, with the priest at their head; the corpse was borne after them on the shoulders of six bearers; it was laid on an open bier, completely covered, and followed by a number of women, who uttered loud cries and wailings at intervals, to show their sorrow.

Having hired a couple of asses, I set out to ride inland to Monfalut, attended by a young Arab of the cangia. After crossing a plain, and a ferry caused by the inundation, and passing by some pretty villages almost buried

in groves of palm-trees, in one of which was held an Arab fair, we entered on a waste of sand, with a part of the Libyan chain of mountains close on the left. The fair displayed a tumultuous assemblage of people, many nearly naked, of both sexes, engaged in buying and selling, with a prodigious noise of tongues. We met great numbers of the peasants bringing their fowls, eggs, and other articles to market. They are heavily oppressed by the Pacha's taxes: even for every date-tree so many paras rent must be paid. Before this prince's reign, and during the first years of it, they were far more happily situated, and lived in comparative plenty: but the troops, they complained, in their frequent passage to the seat of war, plundered them of every thing; and often fancying we came on a similar errand, they hid their poultry and other provisions on our approach. After riding some time, we approached some lofty walls, surrounding a square inclosure, and being curious to know what it contained, we found a small hamlet of Copts within, consisting of five or six dwellings; one

solitary and lofty palm-tree rose in the midst. These poor people conducted us into a rude little building which they called their church; it was imperfectly lighted, and a curtain concealed the entrance into an inner room or sanctuary, out of which they brought, and displayed with no small pride, two wretched paintings in oil colours of the Virgin and her Son, and another of some venerable saint or apostle. On inquiring if they had any books, three large and ancient ones were produced, much the worse for wear, and written in the Coptic characters. The manners and appearance of this little community, thus secluded in the desert, had much innocence and simplicity. Their retreat was secured by a strong door. The patriarch of the hamlet, a venerable old man, gave us his blessing fervently at parting.

Pursuing our way, the next object we came to deserving notice was a very neat Arab burying-ground in the midst of the sand; the tombs were three or four feet high, and plastered white. The Orientals, to show that in their concern for the dead they had not forgotten

the living, had placed here a small reservoir of water, supplied by a well; it was built over at top, which kept it always cool. Towards evening we saw the minarets of Siout at a distance, a very welcome sight. The guide and owner of the asses was an Egyptian, and Achmed kept pace with them on foot. They were the only property he had in the world! he had lost his two children, and their death had blasted all the poor man's prospects of comfort. He burst into tears as he told his desolate state with passionate expressions of sorrow.—"They were the only hope of my life,—for whom I toiled," said he; "and now my wife looks cold and discontented on me, and my home is soured with discord:"—and it being sunset, he then repeated his prayers in a loud tone of voice for half an hour, as he passed along the desert.

On entering the city, the sudden change of objects, from the deep solitude of the way, to the loud sounds and rapid movements of the various people in the streets, was most striking. Arabs, Turks, Nubians, and Albanians, almost impeded the passage; the bazaar was crowded.

My conductor went to the house of Hassan, an Arab, and engaged a rude apartment. A repast in a Turkish town is quickly procured. Dervish, the young sailor of the cangia, went out and quickly brought me a supper of coffee, milk, bread, and roasted meat, all excellent in their kind; the latter consisted of small pieces of mutton well seasoned, and placed on an iron rod, which is turned quickly round over the fire, and in a few minutes they are ready to be served up. It being evening, the Muezzins were calling to prayers from the minarets. One of the mosques which I looked into was a very pretty one, the floor handsomely carpeted and dimly lighted by a small dome in the middle; for these people imagine that a partial and imperfect light is favourable to religious meditation. When it was dark, we returned to the small apartment, where a mat of reed on the floor was my only bed; but Dervish and Achmed slept on the ground without, where the moonlight was so bright as to make it seem like day. Early in the night, I was awakened by the sounds of music and singing in the street

close by, where every thing else was perfectly silent: they were extremely sweet, and passed slowly by. Soon after daybreak, the loud voice of Achmed was heard in an exclamation of praise to Allah: we quickly rose, and having breakfasted on coffee and Turkish pancakes, prepared in the streets at this early hour, we proceeded on our way.

Having left the fertile environs of Siout, and entered on a sandy tract, we came in a few hours in sight of a large caravan, that had halted in the desert; it consisted of Arabs from farther Egypt, who were conveying a number of black slaves to Cairo to be sold. The tent of the chief was distinguished by a piece of blue cloth, suspended from the top; the other tents were pitched around without any order; the camels were turned loose on the sand, and the Arabs were formed into groups, smoking and conversing, while several of the unfortunate blacks were wandering about, or preparing their coarse meals. The chief, thinking, no doubt, I wished to make a purchase, conducted me, with significant gestures and smiles, into a

large tent, which was filled with a number of half-naked young black women, doomed to find masters at Cairo. We soon took leave of the caravan, and on entering again on an inhabited tract, met with a party of villagers, men and women, who were advancing in high glee, and singing; the men seemed preparing for a bout at quarter-staff. Achmed's heart was cheered at the sight, and, forgetting his griefs, he sprang in amongst them, and gave and warded off several blows with his long staff with great agility.—We came after sunset to Monfalut, and rejoined the cangia. Nothing particular occurred till we came to Radamouni, and, having procured asses, rode to the ruins of the Temple of Hermopolis. The portico only remains, and its columns of fine free-stone, unroofed and defenceless, and standing alone in the midst of a plain, having a striking appearance; they are thirty-three feet round and sixty high. Having spent a pleasant day, we passed over in a boat in the cool of the evening to the other shore of the Nile, to visit the ruins of Antinoé, built by the Emperor Adrian: few of the columns are

standing; they are of granite, and of very slender form, being about forty feet high, with Corinthian capitals. Proceeding on our voyage, we landed in order to visit the pyramids of Saccara, some miles distant. The great pyramid, here, is more difficult of ascent than that of Gizéh. The only way of ascending it is by climbing up masses and fragments of stone of various sizes, the outside of one corner of the pyramid having fallen from the top to the bottom. The view from the top, though of a rather different character, is quite as sublime and extensive as that beheld from the summit of Gizéh.

The inundation of the Nile had now subsided, and the flat lands of Egypt, before parched and dry, were covered with a wide and beautiful carpet of verdure; the heat was also sensibly diminished, and this season, the end of October, was probably one of the coolest in the year. Land travelling through Upper Egypt is almost impracticable, from the extreme heat of the weather, during the greater part of the year. The navigation of the Nile is the only advisa-

ble way, for on the river the air is always more fresh and cool, and the nights are uniformly delightful and pleasant.

Returning from the pyramids of Saccara, over a path of soft sand, we were parched with thirst, and would have given any thing for a draught of water, when unexpectedly, as if dropped from the clouds, a Dervish approached us, bearing an immense water-melon, which we received as manna from Heaven. He was very tall and robust, with a handsome countenance, and one of the finest made men I ever beheld—a model that a sculptor would have delighted to copy; he had his lonely dwelling and little garden at some distance, and had purposely crossed our way with this melon, knowing he should be well paid for it.

On our return to Cairo, we took up our abode in the house of M. Asselin, a Frenchman, who had accompanied Chateaubriand to the country, and remained there ever since. He was a man of some science, would shut himself up the greatest part of the day in his room, and wore the European dress, with an immense long

beard, which made his appearance, when he did come out, very singular. You meet occasionally, in the streets of Cairo, with some French Mamelukes; there are fifty of these men, who have changed their religion, in the service of the Pacha: they are great favourites, and have high pay, for during an insurrection of the Pacha's troops, owing to want of pay, about fourteen years ago, he was exposed to great danger, but these Frenchmen, placing themselves before him in a narrow street, fought with such desperate courage, that they made head against all his assailants, and brought him off in safety.

The tomb of the unfortunate Burckhardt is in the Turkish burying-ground, without the city. This incomparable traveller was a most amiable man, and by his long residence among the Arab tribes had acquired the appearance and manners of a Bedouin. The Arabs often speak of Sheik Ibrahim; he was to be met with in the desert mounted on a good Arab horse, meanly dressed, with his lance, and a bag of meal behind him for his food. None of the Europeans, at Cairo, ever knew in what part of

the city he resided, though he would come occasionally to their houses, and drink wine and eat ham like an infidel; but he was fearful of being visited by his countrymen in return, lest the Turks should observe their intimacy. The Pacha was fond of his company, and would sometimes send for and converse with him.

The only places of amusement in Cairo are the coffee-houses, which are generally full; but however numerous the company, as soon as one of the story-tellers begins his tale, there is instant silence. Many of the Arabs display great powers of imagination and memory in these tales, which are admirably suited to amuse an indolent and credulous people.

A Turk, with his long pipe in his hand, will listen for hours to a tale of wonder and enchantment, with deep interest, with exclamations of Allah, and without once interrupting the speaker. This custom, so universally prevalent throughout the East, is useful as well as amusing, for the stories have often an excellent moral; but a tale told in Europe would be a very different thing from one heard in these

countries. The wild and rich imagery of the East would hardly suit our colder climes, any more than the often impassioned and graceful action of the narrator, or the introduction of his genii, Afrit and Goule. Many of these men travel over the country, and get an uncertain living by reciting in the villages and towns; but the most esteemed are to be found in the cities. Their tales are either invented by themselves, or taken from the Arabian Nights and other Oriental writings. A new and good story here, like a new book in Europe, confers fame on the inventor, and becoming popular, passes from one city to another, is quickly learned by the Arabs, and retailed in all the coffee-houses of the land. On the halt of a caravan at evening, when the groups are seated at their tent-doors round the fire, a tale from one of the company is a favourite and never failing source of amusement. You will observe on those occasions men of various nations suspend their converse, and listen intensely to every word that falls from the speaker's lips. The women are debarred this amusement; but there are at Cairo a superior

sort of Almeh girls, who are sent for by the ladies, and amuse them with dancing, singing, and music: it was probably a dance of this voluptuous kind that Herodias performed to please Herod and his officers, and it is a favourite throughout the East.

I passed an evening most agreeably with M. Bokty and his family; he is the Swedish *chargé d'affaires*, and is a very clever and well-informed man. It was his beautiful daughter who was shot in the street some years ago, by a drunken Turkish soldier, as she was riding out between her mother and sister: a green veil which she wore, was supposed to have been the cause of this outrage. The sacred colour of the Prophet is prohibited to the Christians in every way; even a green umbrella would be dangerous to sport here.

The passage of the caravans through Cairo, from the interior of Africa to Mecca, is a very interesting sight, being composed of so many different nations, with their various flags and banners. In this city, where it is vain to long for books to beguile the sultry hours, I had the

exquisite pleasure of meeting with a copy of "The Pleasures of Hope." How it came there it is not easy to tell, but it was a most welcome and delightful stranger on the banks of the Nile: it accompanied me afterwards through Palestine and Syria; and in the wilderness, and in weary and solitary hours, what better and more inspiring consolation could a wanderer wish for? That little volume has been no small traveller; on leaving Syria I gave it to the daughter of the English consul-general at Beirout, at the foot of Mount Lebanon, where, from the value placed on its contents, it is likely to be inviolably preserved.

A singular amusement is to be seen sometimes in the streets: two men, thinly clothed, and fat as butter, with broad, laughing countenances, circle continually round each other, and every time they meet hit one another severe and dexterous blows on the face, singing all the time some humorous song, accompanied by droll gestures and grimaces: this is much enjoyed by the populace.

One day we rode to the palace of the Pacha

at Shoubra: it is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Nile, and one or two of its apartments exhibit all the splendid appendages of Orientalism. The saloon had a very tempting appearance; its rich ottomans and cushions, its fountain and cool recesses, all invited to luxurious repose and enjoyment. The garden was pretty, and laid out in the European manner: in the middle was a charming kiosque shaded by the trees. This prince is a great voluptuary, but temperate in eating and drinking: like most Turks of rank, he avails himself, unlimitedly, of the Prophet's permission of a plurality of wives. We saw the ladies of his harem one day riding out; they were eight in number, but so closely veiled and mantled it was impossible to form any opinion of their countenance or figure. A traveller in the East, who chances to be a physician, is privileged above all men; he obtains admission into the serais, beholds the features of the favourite beauties, and holds long conversations with them; and it is singular how very anxious and curious the eastern ladies are, to see the Hakim or Frank physician. He comes

with a solemn countenance, the very eunuchs look complacent on him, and each lady holds out her beautiful hand, assumes a languishing air, allows him to examine the colour of her eyes, and talks without reserve. Even a trifling knowledge of medicine is of the greatest service; to this we afterwards owed our deliverance from captivity by the Arabs. Even when walking through some parts of Cairo, with Osmin, the renegade Scotsman, who professed to be a bit of a doctor, he was assailed by several women on the subject of their own, or their families' complaints.

The environs of Cairo, since the subsiding of the inundation, are wonderfully improved in beauty, but the only pleasant situation for a residence is at Old Cairo, on the banks of the Nile. It is rather a ruinous place; but there are some merchants' houses at the water's edge, amidst a mass of foliage, which look on the isle of Rhoda, and the village of Gizéh on the opposite shore. In riding to this place, you often see, in the shade of the large trees near the path, groups of women of a certain description, loosely

apparelled, who, having lighted a fire and prepared coffee, allure with their voices and enticing gestures the passenger to join them; but their appearance has few attractions.

One sees at Cairo a good many hadgis or pilgrims from Mecca. These men richly deserve the privileges they acquire, for it is a journey of immense hardship and difficulty. The pilgrimage of the Christians to Jerusalem is mere amusement compared with many of the Moslem's journeys, often from the very heart of Africa: he must cross vast deserts, endure the extremities of thirst and heat, and nothing but an ardent, though misplaced enthusiasm of piety, could possibly sustain his strength of body or mind.

The merchants, who undertake this journey chiefly from the prospect of gain, go prepared with their servants, camels, and a variety of luxuries; but the hosts of poor devoted beings who march on foot, resolved to behold the birthplace of their Prophet, must expect to suffer dreadfully. Many of them, venerable with age, who leave their homes and families to traverse a succession of burning sands, can have little

hope of returning again, and the appearance of a caravan on its return is sometimes like that of an army after battle.

There are various warm baths at Cairo, and the Orientals, both men and women, are passionately fond of the use of them. This bath is at first a fearful ordeal for a European to go through. Having stripped, you first enter the vapour bath, where you remain till the perspiration streams out of the pores. You then enter the warm bath, and afterwards are laid at length on a long seat, a few feet high, and scrubbed without mercy, all over, by a Turkish operator, who next cracks every joint in your limbs, the sound of which may be heard through the apartment. You then put on a light dress, and proceed to the outer room, where you recline on carpets and cushions, and have pipes, coffee, and sherbet, brought you. A soft and luxurious feeling then spreads itself over your body. Every limb and joint is light and free as air, and after all this pommelling and perspiring, you feel more enjoyment than you ever felt before.

Having resolved to visit Mount Sinai, we engaged camels for the journey. The party consisted of Mr. C. an Englishman, Mr. W. a German, (who was a missionary sent from Cambridge, to labour for the conversion of the Jews,) his servant, a poor stupid German, and Michel, who proved invaluable to us, together with six Arabs to attend on the eight camels, and serve as guides. It promised to be a journey of great interest, and we waited impatiently for the moment of departure.

LETTER IX.

ARABIA.

We left Cairo on the 29th of October, in the afternoon, and after proceeding a few miles from the city, our conductors stopped an hour or two near a small caravan that had halted close to some barren hills. Three of our camels were loaded with skins of water, sacks of charcoal, and an excellent tent. The sensation is singular at first finding yourself on the back of the camel; the situation is sufficiently elevated, and not the most soft or comfortable, and the trot of the animal shakes you almost to a mummy, till you get somewhat accustomed to it. The general rate of travelling is a long walk of three miles an hour, which is the caravan pace. At sunset we went on for about four

hours, and then stopped for the night in the midst of the desert. A fire was lighted and supper cooked, but, on putting up the tent, the pole broke, and this obliged us to sleep in the open air. The tent was repaired at Suez, but we never used it during the whole journey, being generally so fatigued on halting for the night, and exposed to start again at such uncertain hours, that we did not care to be at the trouble of fixing and taking it down.

The next day passed without any thing deserving notice, save that our route, as far as the eye could reach, was utterly barren—a vast plain of sand, with little undulation of surface.

The third day we were to set out very early. I chanced to awake before it was light, and, perceiving the Arabs seated round a good fire, could not help joining them. This was one of the scenes that one often loves to picture. Jouma, the chief, had just kneaded and placed a flat cake among the embers, and the Arabs were seated in a group around, smoking and sipping coffee, and enjoying themselves highly,

for the deserts were to them as a home. There is surely a charm in this wild and wandering life, for one soon grows attached to it. These Arabs were very lively and civil, but a wild race, living among the rocks near Mount Sinai in tents. They always carry their coffee, and a pot to boil it in, with them; having first roasted it in a small pan, they pound it with a stick; and a bag of flour to make cakes is their sole provision for a journey besides, for they seldom eat any flesh; they each carried a musquet with a matchlock.

There was not the least verdure to be seen till we arrived near Adjerud, a wretched village about four miles from Suez. Here a few scattered trees were visible, but the village was concealed behind a range of rocky hills, at the foot of which we took up our abode for the night. This part of the country was the haunt of robbers, and our guides were very unwilling to halt here; and, fearful lest we might be attacked in the night, they kept watch throughout the whole of it, but all passed off quietly Mr. W. however, who was conveying a large

chest of Bibles to Mount Sinai, was extremely agitated, lest the robbers, on attacking us, should carry away his chest, as in that case all the hopes of his journey would perish; but the Bedouins would probably quite as soon have left it behind.

The next day we arrived at Suez in the forenoon, and having a letter for the Consul for our nation there, who was a Greek, we were received by his son, who spoke some English. The father, a very fine old man, with a white beard, soon made his appearance. Some cakes and wine, the latter from Jerusalem, were brought, and dinner ordered to be ready in an hour. In the mean time we walked down to the shore of the Red Sea. This can only be called a corner of it, as it is narrow and shallow, and its termination is about three miles above. A range of mountains forms the shore, on the right; the opposite coast of Arabia is flat and sandy. Suez is a wretched town, and surrounded by a low wall. The old consul gave us an excellent dinner, and at night we returned to our rude resting-place without the

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walls: yet this was not without its comforts, for, having procured some delicious fish out of the Red Sea, we formed a circle on the sand, supped in high spirits, and sipped our coffee with greater zest than we should have done in a luxurious drawing-room at home.

Having passed round the termination of the sea the next morning, we bent our course towards the wilderness of Sinai, and came in a few hours to four or five pools of water, called The Fountains of Moses, but at which it is not probable he could ever have been.

The weather continued beautiful, scarcely a cloud to be seen in the sky, and not a living thing on earth; and this deep solitude and silence, with the uncommon purity of the air, have a strong effect on the imagination. You feel as if you ruled in this vast and inanimate scene, and possess a buoyant and joyous spirit amidst its savage sands and rocks, and feel the truth of a remark of Lord B.'s, of a young French renegade, who resided many years in the East, and who said that often, when riding alone

in a boundless desert, he has felt a delight that was indescribable.

On the morning of the third day our water-skins were exhausted, and we had to push on for five or six hours ere we arrived at the next fountain; it was situated at the edge of the wilderness of Paran. One of the Arabs had gone on before to the spot, and it being by this time very hot, we sprang from our camels, boiled our coffee, and though the water was rather brackish, no breakfast was ever more welcome. The desert now assumed a bolder character. Hitherto it had been a waste of sand, generally hard, and varied with some hills, and high rocks towards the horizon. These were now increased to mountains, which rose also on each side the path, and gave it a fine and romantic character.

Mr. W.'s servant, Franco, afforded us some amusement. He was very artful, and a great glutton, though he persuaded his master he half-starved himself: and, when he came to a meal, generally cast on it such a look as the good St. Bruno did on his bread mixed with

ashes, when he wept at the thought that man should take such trouble about the body; but when Franco found himself alone, cheese, rice, and coffee, disappeared like magic. He had a nose and chin like a hatchet, and, settling himself on the camel's back in the position of one of the granite statues of Memnon, used to sing pious German psalms through the desert half the day long. Towards evening, Franco was generally most melodious, but the tunes were mostly mournful; his voice had a sort of nasal twang, and the rugged German cadence used to strike the Arabs with dismay. It was good sport afterwards to desire Franco to sing in a numerous circle of these people; he had hardly finished three or four stanzas before some laughed, whilst others vehemently desired him to stop, with many expressions of displeasure.

Leaving the valley of Paran, the path led over a rocky wilderness, to render which more gloomy the sky became clouded, and a shower of rain fell. By moonlight we ascended the hills, and after some hours' progress, rested for

the night on the sand. The dews had fallen heavily for some nights, and the clothes that covered us were quite wet in the morning; but as we advanced, the dews ceased. Our mode of life, though irregular, was quite to a wanderer's taste. We sometimes stopped for an hour at mid-day, or more frequently took some bread and a draught of water on the camel's back; but we were repaid for our fatigues, when we halted for the evening, as the sun was sinking in the desert, and, having taken our supper, strolled amidst the solitudes, or spent the hours in conversation till dark. But the bivouac by night was the most striking. When, arriving fatigued long after dark, the two fires were lighted, I have frequently retired to some distance to gaze at the group of Arabs round theirs; it was so entirely in keeping. They were sipping their coffee and talking with expressive action and infinite vivacity; and as they addressed each other, they often bent over the flame which glanced on their white turbans and drapery and dark countenances, and the camels stood behind, and stretched their long necks over their

masters. Having finished our repast, we wrapped ourselves in our cloaks, and lay down round the fire: and let not that couch be pitied, for it was delightful, as well as romantic, to sink to rest as you looked on that calm and glorious sky, the stars shining with a brilliancy you have no conception of in our climate. Then in the morning we were suddenly summoned to depart, and the camels being loaded, we were soon on the march. Jouma frequently chanted his melancholy Arab song, for at this time we were seldom disposed to converse, and were frequently obliged to throw a blanket over our cloaks, and walk for some hours, to guard against the chillness of the air. The sunsets in Egypt are the finest; but to see a sunrise in its glory, you must be in the Desert,—nothing there obscures or obstructs it. You are travelling on chill and silent, and your looks bent towards the East; a variety of glowing hues appear and die away again, and for some time the sky is blue and clear; when the sun suddenly darts above the horizon, and such a splendour is thrown instantly on the wide expanse of sand and rocks,

that if you were a Persian adorer, you would certainly break out, like the Imaun from the minaret, in praise and blessing.

The way now became very interesting, and varied by several narrow deep valleys, where a few stunted palms grew. The next morning we entered a noble desert, lined on each side by lofty mountains of rock, many of them perfectly black, with sharp and ragged summits. In the midst of the plain, which rose with a continual yet gentle ascent, were isolated rocks of various forms and colours, and over its surface were scattered a number of shrubs of a lively green. Through all the route we had met few passengers. One or two little caravans, or a lonely wanderer with his camel, had passed at times and given us the usual salute of "Peace be unto you!" While at Suez, we were fortunate enough to purchase a few pounds of excellent tea, and it now proved of inestimable use to us. It was a good piece of advice of Dr. C. the traveller, to those who visit the East, to provide themselves with this luxury. It is impossible to procure animal

food on such a journey. Some rice and bread and coffee constitute your chief subsistence.

We passed this evening a small place of graves at the foot of a high precipice; they were the tombs of Arabs who had died in their journey through this wilderness. They were erected by their companions, and consisted of rude pieces of rock fixed in the sand. A few of these burial-places are seen scattered amidst these deserts, and they are generally situated in some secluded spot, or beneath the shade and protection of a mountain. Although Mohammedans, the Arabs appear to have very imperfect notions of religion. Our escort was but little given to prayer; and the tribes we afterwards fell in with, got on without it altogether. Mr. W. made many attempts to enlighten the minds of Jouma and his comrades; but Franco was of another stamp: he used to slip aside of an evening and pray very devoutly to the Virgin Mary. Idolater that he was, his master's efforts to convert him to the bosom of Protestantism proved in vain: but it was not

till after supper that his mind was given to aspiration.

This night, our place of halting was in a very wild valley, inclosed by naked and precipitous mountains, on whose sides the moonlight fell vividly. In the midst of the glen below, the Arabs and their camels formed an animated group. The dress of these people is picturesque, being of a coarse white colour, and consisting of a turban, a tunic, sash, a shiluah, or loose pantaloon, that reaches just below the knee, like the Highland kilt, and sandals. We sent Jouma and Michel on before to the convent of Sinai, to give notice of our approach. Long before sunrise the following day, we set out, and stopped in a most romantic valley; and the morning being chill, we collected a large quantity of shrubs for fire, and made our breakfast.

The Israelites, during their wanderings of forty years in these deserts, must have lived but insipidly, even with manna and quails, having nothing but water to drink, after a cold

night's encampment, or amidst the burning heats of the day. You feel careless what you eat in such a region, but to be debarred coffee, tea, or now and then a little lime-juice, would be misery; without the former, it is certain the Arabs could not endure existence; they are satisfied with a little coarse bread or unleavened cake twice a-day, but coffee is more than manna to them.

A few hours more, and we got sight of the mountains round Sinai. Their appearance was magnificent; when we drew nearer and emerged out of a deep pass, the scenery was infinitely striking, and on the right extended a vast range of mountains as far as the eye could reach, from the vicinity of Sinai down to Tor. They were perfectly bare, but of grand and singular form.

We had hoped to reach the convent by daylight, but the moon had risen some time, when we entered the mouth of a narrow pass, where our conductors advised us to dismount. A gentle yet perpetual ascent led on, mile after mile, up this mournful valley, whose aspect

was terrific, yet ever varying. It was not above two hundred yards in width, and the mountains rose to an immense height on each side. The road wound at their feet along the edge of a precipice, and amidst masses of rock that had fallen from above. It was a toilsome path, generally over stones, placed like steps, probably by the Arabs: and the moonlight was of little service to us in this deep valley, as it only rested on the frowning summits above. Where is Mount Sinai? was the inquiry of every one. The Arabs pointed before to Gabel Mousa, the Mount of Moses, as it is called; but we could not distinguish it. Again, and again, point after point was turned, and we saw but the same stern scenery. But what had the softness and beauty of Nature to do here? Mount Sinai required an approach like this, where all seemed to proclaim the land of miracles, and to have been visited by the terrors of the Lord. The scenes, as you gazed around, had an unearthly character, suited to the sound of the fearful trumpet that was once heard there. We entered at last on the more open

valley, about half a mile wide, and drew near this famous mountain. Sinai is not so lofty as some of the mountains around it, and in its form there is nothing graceful or peculiar to distinguish it from others.

Near midnight we reached the Convent of St. Catherine, at the foot of the mountain, and surrounded by a high wall, to guard it against the Arabs. Jouma was lying fast asleep at its foot, wrapped in his cloak, beside the embers of his fire, but he instantly arose and welcomed us. Michel was safely housed in the convent. After calling loudly for some time, a window was opened at the top of the wall, and a rope thrown down; fastening this round the body, and grasping it fast, we were drawn up one after another by the monks, and received in through the window, which was the only place of entrance. Our baggage came up afterwards, and then we were conducted up several flights of steps and passages to our chambers. Michel, who spoke Modern Greek like a native, and who was our only interpreter with these monks, had allotted a room for Mr. C. and myself, and

another for Mr. W. and his servant. These apartments are very small, and covered with a handsome carpet and cushions, with part of the floor raised in the eastern style; and a neat lamp was suspended from the ceiling and already lighted. There was real voluptuousness in all this to our feelings, after the passage through the Desert. After all, happiness is in a great measure derived from the contrast of situations; and is, in this respect, perhaps, not unlike eastern scenery—plains and valleys blooming like Paradise, amidst naked mountains and wilds. No calm, comfortable, luxurious life in England could ever afford those vivid and transporting feelings which were ours during those journeys in the East.

These recluses are of the Greek church, and are about twenty in number, mostly elderly men. The convent was founded by Justinian, fourteen hundred years ago. It is large, and kept remarkably clean. They brought us a frugal supper, and some brandy made out of dates, and we then walked in the corridor without, situated in the loftiest part of the con-

vent. The precipices of Sinai encircled and hung over the convent, and the moonlight now rested on them.

The next morning we heard the voices of the monks at their prayers very early, and they invited us to breakfast with them in the refectory at nine o'clock. This meal is the only one they have during the day; though, if any one is much in want afterwards, he is allowed a little bread and cheese in his own cell about sunset. The breakfast consisted of a small loaf of fine white bread, a dish of pea, or barley-soup, a few radishes, and a small glass of brandy to each person,—for they never eat animal food. The refectory is a long, and very good room, with a large picture of Hell and Paradise at the higher end, that they may not indulge too much in the good things of this world at breakfast. The damned are writhing in all sorts of grotesque postures, and the righteous rejoicing at the very edge of the flames. In a small pulpit near the door stood a monk, who read out of the gospels all the time of the repast, and there were many occasional crossings

and cessations of eating among the good fathers at different periods of the lecture. Now the dish of soup was so substantial, that it really required a day's journey through the Desert to get on with it at all; but the spoons of the good fathers never ceased solemnly going, till all was devoured, and the loaf and salad bore company with it. They then rose and turned to the altar, and after sundry gesticulations, we all adjourned to the corridor without, where coffee was handed round, two cups to each monk.

These fathers are an exceedingly harmless set of men, and in general very ignorant. Many of them had lived here a long time, and, though bent nearly double, bore witness to the uncommon healthiness of the climate; as their cheeks were florid, and their looks cheerful and vigorous.

One is surprised to find here a large and elegant church, with a floor of beautiful marble, and a pulpit profusely adorned with gold. This edifice has three lofty aisles. You pass from one into a small apartment, where, be-

neath a little niche adorned with filigree work of gold, and lighted dimly by three small lamps, is shown the spot where once stood the burning bush. Pictures of the Virgin and her Son and many saints were placed round the sides of this singular spot. In a recess in another part of the church is the tomb of St. Catherine, the patroness of the monastery; it is of white marble, emits a most agreeable perfume, and is covered with rich silk, and placed beneath a canopy supported by pillars. The monks confessed it was not the real body of St. Catherine that was inclosed in the tomb, but only an image of wax, that was a good resemblance of her. The irreparable loss of the body of that excellent lady was occasioned by the villany of the Catholics, who, burning with envy to see the Greeks in possession of such a treasure, that was sure to work the most astonishing miracles, stole it by night a few days after her death; and having lugged it on their shoulders through the ravines and over the precipices around, had gained the summit of Mount St. Catherine, and were exulting in the idea of its being theirs

for ever, when the angels, who beheld all this with infinite interest, descended suddenly and carried the good lady up to Heaven, leaving the Catholics filled with rage and mortification.

A part of one of the walls of the church consisted of many exquisite and various sorts of marble, sent as a present from St. Sophia at Constantinople. The great altar is very beautiful, being inlaid, as well as the pillars which support it, with pieces of mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell.

The superior is a man of very dignified appearance and polite manners, and seems to know the world well: he was very inquisitive about the affairs of Greece, in which he took a deep interest. After breakfast he invited us to his apartment, where he produced some fruit and a bottle of excellent white wine. He said that in their library, about a century ago, was a curious manuscript that had remained there for ages, till the Grand Signior sent from Constantinople to have it delivered up. Mohammed, in his troubles and wanderings, had sometimes found shelter in the convent of Sinai, and out

of gratitude had given to the convent an assurance of his and his followers' protection, which being unable to write himself, having dipped his hand in ink, he had stamped it with the impression. It is certain the Monks of Mount Sinai are regarded with peculiar respect by the Turks; and those of other Greek convents, when travelling in different parts of the East, or in hazardous situations, say they belong to the convent of Sinai.

The life led by these recluses is a most dreary and monotonous one; they never dare to venture into the Desert, for fear of the Arabs, who bear a deadly hatred to them, and would enjoy as much pleasure in putting them out of the world, as they would so many wild beasts. About six years ago these fellows climbed up the precipices that overhang the convent, and, firing down, shot two of the fathers who happened to be at the door of their apartments. The monks enter their garden only by a subterraneous passage, which is secured at the end by a very strong door. The garden, which is sur-

rounded by a high wall, is a rich and beautiful spot, created entirely by the great industry of these people. You see there the palm, the cypress, and poplar, with a profusion of vegetables; and vines were bending with large bunches of grapes, in a more forward state even than they were at Cairo. The cultivating this garden is the only resource and amusement the monks have. During Bonaparte's residence at Cairo he ordered the convent wall to be built higher, and sent two pieces of cannon for its defence; but these men of peace never use them, although one discharge would send the Arabs over the Desert in a moment. But these fellows know very well they keep excellent white bread in the convent, and they come and fire their musquets at the walls, with loud threats, till the fathers open the window at the top and throw out a quantity of cakes of bread to the Arabs, who gather them up with avidity, and depart. The convent is supplied with rice and flour by the Greek monastery at Cairo; and the Bedouins allow these supplies to pass safely,

knowing it will be the best way to demand their contributions subsequently. Among the few luxuries here, were excellent almonds and dates, and good cheese, which they had improved out of the coarse article used in Egypt.

LETTER X.

ARABIA.

At no great distance from the convent is the scene, in the solitudes of Midian, where tradition says Moses kept the sheep of Jethro, his father-in-law. It is a valley at the back of the Mount, between two ranges of mountains. A solitary group of trees stands in the middle. The superior apologised for his inability to supply us with any other than vegetable food, and advised us to buy a goat of the Arabs. A miserable creature, which had been obliged all its life to keep Lent on the rocks, was purchased for seven piastres, and, being pulled up through the window, was slain for the Christians' use, and served up, dressed in different ways, for dinner in the evening; but it proved so

meagre, and had so unhappy a flavour, that we were obliged to abandon it.

A venerable monk, above ninety years of age, the oldest in the convent, paid us a visit in our apartments: he had resided here seventy years; and we asked him in what manner his life had passed during this best part of a century's confinement within the convent and garden-walls. One day, he said, had passed away like another; he had seen only the precipices, the sky, and the desert; and he strove now to fix all his thoughts on another world, and waited calmly the hour of his departure. He then dwelt much on the vanity of human pleasures and the nearness of eternity, and ended by asking me, very earnestly, for a bottle of rum. We had but one left for our future journey, but gave it, however, to gratify the old father, who requested that my servant, when he brought it to his cell, would conceal it beneath his cloak, lest his brethren should catch a glimpse of it.

On the third morning we set out early from the convent for the summit of Mount Sinai, with two Arab guides. The ascent was, for

some time, over long and broken flights of stone steps, placed there by the Greeks. The path was often narrow and steep, and wound through lofty masses of rock on each side. In about half an hour we came to a well of excellent water; a short distance above which is a small ruined chapel. About half way up was a verdant and pleasant spot, in the midst of which stood a high and solitary palm, and the rocks rose in a small and wild amphitheatre around. We were not very long now in reaching the summit, which is of limited extent, having two small buildings on it, used formerly by the Greek pilgrims, probably for worship. But Sinai has four summits; and that of Moses stands almost in the middle of the others, and is not visible from below, so that the spot where he received the law must have been hid from the view of the multitudes around; and the smoke and flame, which, Scripture says, enveloped the entire Mount of Sinai, must have had the more awful appearance, by reason of its many summits and great extent; and the account delivered gives us reason to imagine that

the summit or scene where God appeared was shrouded from the hosts around; as the seventy elders only were permitted to behold "the body of heaven in its clearness, the feet of sapphire," &c. But what occasions no small surprise, at first, is the scarcity of plains, valleys, or open places, where the children of Israel could have stood conveniently to behold the glory on the Mount. From the summit of Sinai you see only innumerable ranges of rocky mountains. One generally places, in imagination, around Sinai, extensive plains, or sandy deserts, where the camp of the hosts was placed, where the families of Israel stood at the doors of their tents, and the line was drawn round the mountain, which no one might break through on pain of death. But it is not thus: save the valley by which we approached Sinai, about half a mile wide, and a few miles in length, and a small plain we afterwards passed through, with a rocky hill in the middle, there appear to be few open places around the Mount. We did not, however, examine it on all sides. On putting the question to the superior of the con-

vent, where he imagined the Israelites stood: everywhere, he replied, waving his hands about —in the ravines, the valleys, as well as the plains.

Having spent an hour here, we descended to the place of verdure, and after resting awhile, took our road, with one of the guides, towards the mountain of St. Catherine. The rapture of Mr. W.'s feelings on the top of Sinai was indescribable; I expected to see him take flight for a better region. Being the son of a Rabbi at Munich, the conviction of being on the scene where God visited his people, and conferred such glory on them, was almost too much for him. After ascending again in another direction, we came at last to a long and steep descent that commanded a very noble scene, and reached finally a little valley at the bottom, that was to be our resting-place for the night. The mountains rose around this valley in vast precipices—a line of beautiful verdure ran along its whole extent, in the midst of which stood a deserted monastery. The fathers had long been driven from it by the Arabs; but its va-

rious apartments were still entire, and afforded an excellent asylum for a traveller. This deep solitude had an exceeding and awful beauty;—the palms, the loftiest I ever saw, rose moveless, and the garden and grove were desolate and neglected; the fountain in the latter was now useless, and the channel of the rivulet that ran through the valley was quite dry; the walls were in ruins, and the olive, the poplar, and other trees, grew in wild luxuriance. Some old books of devotion were yet left behind within. Having chosen an apartment in the upper story, which opened into the corridor, and had been one of the cells of the exiled fathers, we took possession of it at night, kindled a fire on a large stone in a corner, and made a good supper of the rude provisions we had. There needed no spirit of romance in order to enjoy the situation exquisitely; few ideal pictures ever equalled the strangeness and savageness of this forsaken sanctuary in the retreats of Sinai. A quantity of dry shrubs had been spread on the floor for our bed, but it was impossible to sleep yet, as the moon had risen on the valley,

and one of the Arabs went to another part of the corridor and played his rude guitar for our amusement. But still we slept soundly that night after our fatigues, and were called, long before sunrise next morning, by the Arabs, to ascend St. Catherine's. The path was almost always steep, sometimes even precipitous, and consisted of loose stones which gave way under the feet. The wind was extremely cold: the Arabs' hands were quite cramped by it. With great pleasure we reached a well of water deadly cold, beneath a perpendicular precipice, where it was never visited by the sun. After resting awhile, we again ascended, always amidst rocks of vast height, of the most grand and imposing forms, till we reached the summit, which was a very small peak, not above fifty feet in circumference. The wind here was so keen and subtile, that it seemed to pierce through us.

St. Catherine's, supposed by some to be Mount Horeb, is the highest mountain in all the region around; but from its summit, as far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be

seen on every side but ranges of naked mountains succeeding each other like waves of the sea. Between these rocky chains there are, in general, only ravines or narrow valleys. We at last began to descend, and with great pleasure reached the well again; and having climbed to the ledge of rock beneath which it stood, we kindled a fire and boiled some coffee, which drank like nectar; the cold was quickly banished from our frames, and we got into excellent spirits. Were my fancy stored with eastern imagery, I should exhaust it all in praise of this most excellent beverage, which is the real amulet and never-failing resource amidst fatigues and all sorts of hardships and privations.

We now descended to the desolate monastery in the glen, and taking each an Arab pipe, solaced ourselves in the abodes of the fathers, till the sultry heat was passed, and then proceeded for about two hours till we came to the celebrated rock of Meribah. It still bears striking evidence of the miracle about it, and is quite isolated in the midst of a narrow valley,

which is here about two hundred yards broad. There are four or five fissures, one above the other, on the face of the rock, each of them about a foot and half long, and a few inches deep. What is remarkable, they run along the breadth of the rock, and are not rent downwards; they are more than a foot asunder, and there is a channel worn between them by the gushing of the water. The Arabs still reverence this rock, and stuff shrubs into the holes, that when any of their camels are sick they may eat of them and recover. Two of the holes at this time were filled with reed for this purpose, and they believed it to be endowed with a peculiar virtue. The rock is of a beautiful granite, and is about five yards long, five in height, and four yards wide.

This narrow valley soon opened into a plain, capable of containing a large number of people, where they probably stood, as well as around the rock, and in the valley, to receive the water that poured down. It is difficult to take that passage in Scripture literally, which says that the water from the rock followed them in their

journeyings, when it is considered that from the nature of the country, their course was afterwards over rocky and rugged places and tracts of sand: to have carried that water over stony ascents and along dry and desert paths, which absorb all moisture, would have been an infinitely greater miracle than the bringing it at first out of the rock, or reproducing it in different parts of their journeys. Perhaps the passage may be intended to convey the latter meaning.

The two servants had been left behind in the convent, as Michel had been taken ill with a fever, and we were not aware that our Arab guides were disposed to act so treacherous a part.—We had left the spot about an hour; it was after sunset, and we were not very far from the convent, and were congratulating ourselves on being soon in our luxurious little cells, and enjoying a good supper after our fatigues, when we perceived some camels and dismounted Arabs standing at a small distance on the left; they had waited for us in this spot, and now called loudly to us to stop. We disregarded this, and

walked on, when a Sheik advanced, and seized Mr. C. who shook him off: a young Arab, being enraged at this, drew his pistol, and presenting it, was about to fire, when another chief seized his arm, and in a moment we found ourselves surrounded and in the power of these Bedouins, who were twelve in number, among whom were three Sheiks; they were all armed with matchlock guns and sabres. Our effects and arms were in the convent, and we had nothing with us worth taking. They had arrived from their camp, some days distant, to demand a contribution of provisions from the monastery, which was refused by the fathers, the demand being so large, and they declaring they could not comply with it without permission from the superior convent at Cairo. The Arabs being enraged, and aware of our being abroad, resolved to seize on, and detain us till a ransom was paid, or their demands complied with. In the confusion of the capture, and the noise of so many speaking at once, we hardly knew what they would be at; it was vain to tell them we were Ingleise, and at peace with them;

that we were friends of the Pacha of Egypt. They lighted the matches of their musquets, and marched towards the convent, and, on approaching the garden wall, held a parley with two of the domestics on the top of it, and then proceeded beneath the high window, where, being much enraged, they were prepared for any violence. After calling loudly for some time, one of the monks reluctantly appeared at the window, and held a brief conversation with them; but it came to nothing. Had they known any thing of an escalade, with what joy would they have stormed the convent, and put every one to the sword! We were then conducted some distance down the valley, till we arrived at the place where the night was to be passed; it was bright moonlight, and, being very thinly clad, we felt the air extremely chill.

Hassan, the chief, was a tall and noble-looking man, with eagle eyes, and teeth like the driven snow. He swore vehemently that he cared nothing for the Sultan of Turkey, of England, or for Mahmoud Ali; that no power should rescue us out of his hands. Beside some low and

ruined walls a fire was kindled, the party soon assembled around it, and a cloak was laid on the ground behind, where the three captives were to rest. The fire was immensely large, and burnt fiercely, and threw its glare on the wild and dark features of the circle of Arabs around it, who conversed with vivid animation, and with passionate gestures. They had the civility to hand us a small cup of their coffee—a poor exchange for the good supper we had lost. If ever a day's exertion deserved a bed of down, it was the ascent of St. Catherine's; but our couch was the hard ground. I took a stone for my pillow; my companions were little better off; but we were quite exhausted with fatigue, and imagination fled in vain to our luxurious little chambers in the convent, with their soft cushions, and lamp already lighted, and the harmless monks gathering around. The cold wind awoke me in the night; the Arabs were fast asleep around the glowing embers of their fire, and, stepping cautiously over them, I got beside it, and never in my life enjoyed its warmth more. That night-scene was a fine sub-

ject for a painter:—the precipices that rose close at hand, on which the moonlight rested; the sleeping figures of the Arabs round the fire beneath, and the ruined walls beside; the wild and solemn character of the scenery, fitted beyond all others to be a theatre for miracles, would have made an assemblage of objects but seldom beheld together.

The next morning, before sunrise, they were ready to depart for their camp, two or three days' journey distant. We made known to Hassan our uncertainty and apprehension of what would be their behaviour to us, when the chief lifted his right hand to Heaven, and swore by Allah we should suffer no injury while in his power: an oath which is seldom violated by them. Being all mounted on camels, we set off; towards evening we proceeded at a brisk trot, and entered the wilderness of Paran. The sun was setting, and we passed, at no great distance, Mount Paran: its form was most singular, yet indescribably grand; it had three sharp and pointed summits, and its side towards the wilderness was formed of perpendicular preci-

pices of rock; between its three summits, which rose like towers, were cast the declining beams of the sun. It brought to mind the fine passage in the Prophet, "The glory of God shined from Mount Paran," &c.

The walk of the camel is not disagreeable, but the trot at which we had lately advanced, was no small inconvenience. Mr. W., who was rather unaccustomed to riding, disliked it much; he lamented our misfortune the most of any of the party; and he had reason, since his career of doing good to the people round Sinai and Tor was put a stop to, his journals and papers left in the convent, and it was uncertain how long this captivity was to last. He was an excellent young man, and full of zeal in the prosecution of his object, but very unfit to meet with reverses of this kind, or to struggle with evils out of the path of his mission. He was our only interpreter with the Bedouins, as he had some knowledge of the Arabic language.

The chief had given us reason to expect we should this night sleep under cover, and enjoy a comfortable meal, both of which we stood greatly

in need of; but after travelling two or three hours after dark, and looking in vain for the light of some dwelling, we halted in the midst of the wilderness, where the sand was again to be our bed. Our supper consisted of some cake made of coarse flour and water, kneaded flat, and baked in the embers, and some coffee, without milk or sugar; however, we partook of it sociably with our captors, and then lay down to rest near some high bushes, through which the cold wind whistled shrill during the night. We set out long before sunrise next morning. The valley of Paran now became very narrow; the barriers of lofty rocks on each side approached each other closely; among them were often seen veins of various and beautiful marble. The hosts of Israel are supposed to have marched from the Red Sea to Sinai by this route. After advancing about three hours, we halted at a beautiful grove of palm-trees in the valley, in which was a spring of excellent water; some Arabs resided here, and we looked with anxiety for our breakfast. Of all modes of life upon earth, that of the Arabs possesses the fewest indulgences.

They placed on a rock a large piece of the cold cake left the night before, for our breakfast, and which, being unleavened, was as heavy as lead; and the lonely grove of palms, and the sublime scenery of the wilderness, were insufficient at that moment to appease our vexation; for the pleasures of imagination, or the picturesque, would all have been instantly bartered for a good comfortable breakfast.

We then proceeded, without halting, till about four o'clock, when we came to a small encampment of Arabs, who were the friends of Hassan's tribe. It was interesting to see the meeting of these friendly tribes in the desert: from their wandering habit of life, and their frequent and distant journeys, they seldom meet; but when they do, the pressing of the hand to the heart, the kiss on the cheek, the passionate exclamations and gestures of joy, prove the sincerity and fervour of their feelings. These Arabs insisted on our staying all night with them: we were very happy to hear this, as it was yet some hours ere sunset, and the journey of the day had been long enough. The camp

consisted of ten tents ranged in a line; in one of these we were all accommodated. Our entertainers killed a goat for supper by way of a feast; it was boiled, as all their meat is, and served up, cut into large pieces, on dishes of wood; we had to help ourselves with our fingers: there were also thin cakes of bread, and a dish of melted butter to dip them in. This mountain-goat was eaten with great relish, and coffee was afterwards served round, with pipes. The Arabs appeared to enjoy themselves very much, and passed a long time in conversation; but as night drew on, they all dropped off one after another, and left us in possession of the tent, in common with a number of goats, who inhabited the further part. In the middle of the night, I was awoke by something moving near me, and, putting out my hand, laid hold of a huge black goat, who probably considering his territory invaded, had come to reconnoitre the intruders: he then went and trampled over W. who was buried in a profound sleep, and whom the dim light from the desert scarcely allowed to distinguish what kind of being molested him:

—at last, having completely broken our repose, which we could scarcely afford to lose, the goat calmly walked off to his own quarters.

Our servants at this time were living safely and luxuriously in the convent. Franco was quite at home, and ate his meals in peace and good will, although, being a Catholic, he could hold little Christian fellowship with such heathens as the Greeks; however, he took possession of his master's room, reposed on the cushions, and sang his German hymns with much comfort. Michel was ill of a fever, and implored Franco to take a camel and follow and attend us during our captivity; but he shrunk at the idea of being in the hands of such lawless idolaters, where his outward man would be famished, and the inner one sorely buffeted and tried. The good fathers had wept at our capture, and protested their inability to afford the smallest alleviation. During the whole of the day that followed it, the convent was assailed by a fire of musquetry from a number of Arabs, which rendered it unsafe to walk in the corridor or stir out of the apartments. This affords an illustra-

tion of the memorable print kept in the convents of Sinai and Cairo, which is given to all pilgrims to carry to their homes, and of which several were presented to us. In this print is a lofty and vivid representation of Mount Sinai, rising up like a huge tower: Moses is seen toiling up the steep, with a long beard and staff, and nearly arrived at the top; beneath is the convent of Mount Sinai, out of the window of which is pushed the bald head of a monk, who is engaged in relieving the wants of the wicked Arabs, who, drawing their bows, cover the sands below; the arrows are seen flying and the loaves of bread falling at the same moment: the rock of Meribah, though some distance off, is brought in sight, and the water gushing forth. In the background, although near two hundred miles off, is seen the passage of the Red Sea by the Egyptians; and Pharaoh, who leads them on, is shown sinking in his chariot, to hasten which catastrophe, Moses, who stands on the shore, has just aimed a tremendous blow at him with a cudgel.

Few pilgrims, however, approach Mount

Sinai now; and that intercourse with their fellow-creatures, which the resort to the convent formerly afforded the fathers, they are now almost entirely deprived of. The chief part of the day they are shut up in their cells or walking in the garden, and at evening they are to be seen seated on benches before the doors of their apartments; each, when the weather is cold, with his little pot of charcoal burning before him.

LETTER XI.

ARABIA.

At an early hour on the following day, we quitted this Arab camp. The wilderness through which we travelled, afforded a variety of romantic scenes. In a few hours we came to a long and steep defile, and soon afterwards reached a well, the only one in the surrounding region: it was in the sand, and a flight of steps descended to it. The Arabs stopped to give their camels water here, and said we should soon be at their camp. It was near mid-day when we arrived at it. It consisted of fourteen tents ranged in a line, the chief's being at the end; he gave us the tent adjoining his own, and we took possession of our new abode. All these tents had only three sides, were flat at top, and

quite open in front. Each contained a family, by whom these wanderers were received with joy; indeed they seemed to feel that they were now at their own home and their own threshold. But such a home as that Arab camp was, has probably been but rarely seen: it was a perfect prison of nature, and stood in the midst of a naked valley of white sand, about three hundred yards broad and a mile in length, and was inclosed on every side by black and lofty precipices: we had entered it by a winding and narrow defile, and it appeared to have no outlet. It was useless for our captors to keep a strict eye over our motions, as they had hitherto done, for every attempt at escape would have been in vain. They gave us some bread and dates for dinner, and we then strove to amuse ourselves as well as we could. But so destitute was this place of all resources, either for the imagination or the senses, and so dreary was its aspect, that our spirits sank involuntarily, and the hours passed most heavily along.

Could the eye but have rested on one cheering object, a spot of verdure or shade, even a

lonely palm-tree, there would have been something to have solaced our *tædium;* but from morning till night nothing was to be seen but the precipices and the bright sand, on which the sun glared so fiercely, that it was often painful to gaze upon.

The other sheiks now parted from Hassan, and went to their homes. In the evening we sat round the fire at the door of our tent, drank coffee, and smoked a pipe to pass the time; and the Arabs sometimes joined us. The hatred these people bear to the monks is excessive; they made use of every oath in their language when abusing them, and a chief took a piece of brown bread from his vest and held it up—"Is this good," said he, "for us to eat, while in the convent they have it so white?" The sons of devils and of perdition, they declared, should not be feasting within their walls in that manner. Another cause of their hatred was the Book of Might, which they protested and believed the priests kept in the convent, and buried it for the greater part of the year in the earth. They said this book had power, whenever it was opened and

exposed to the air, to bring rain upon the earth, so that their hearts were made glad, and their deserts refreshed. But the priests, out of the malice they bore to the Arabs, kept it in general buried deep; in consequence, they were seldom blessed with any rain.

The ignorance of these Bedouins was very great; they professed to be Mohammedans, but they never made use of prayer, nor was the least appearance of devotion ever observable amongst them. Even in this secluded spot, so inveterate is the force of habit, that the Arab women, whenever they made their appearance, had their faces closely veiled. Hassan had two wives, Amra and Mirrha, the one young and the other elderly, and we often heard their voices in the adjoining tent; sometimes they appeared to be in altercation, from the shrill and scolding tone of the senior bride.

To vary the scene, I sometimes climbed up the rocks, and sat for hours, but the view was bounded by the narrow glen beneath, and the precipices above, behind which the sun sank at an early hour; and when the gloom of evening

fell, and the air became chill, we were glad to assemble in our tent round a fire. It is said that men in a state of extreme hunger often dream of banquets and tables of luxury:—the imagination was here perpetually wandering to scenes of verdure and loveliness; often Crusoe's lonely island floated before me, and groves of orange-trees, sweet fountains, and banks of perfume, became almost embodied in this scene of desolation. There was no water nearer to the camp than the well at which we stopped on our approach, and the camels were sent thither every day. No situation could be better adapted to the Bedouins than this: it was scarcely possible for a stranger to discover it, and it was still more difficult to attack it. Yet their condition possessed few things to attach them to it, save its unbounded liberty: surrounded by lands of despotism, they were beyond the reach of power or pursuit, and might truly call these wild and waste regions their own.

In appearance these men were light and active, though very slender, and had all of them expressive dark eyes and beautiful teeth. The

quantity of food they consumed was excessively small, little else than coarse cake baked in the embers, and a little coffee twice a-day. They were not very cleanly in their way of eating; for their favourite dish, of which they invited us to partake, consisted of a number of warm cakes, broken up into a large wooden vessel; a quantity of warm water was then poured on them, and, some fat being also mixed, the whole was stirred well with the hand; and then the Arabs formed in a circle round the dish, and plunged their dark hands promiscuously into it. After they had devoured about half the contents, they rose, and another circle took their place and finished them. One evening, however, they killed a goat, which they procured from the mountains, for our supper, and we formed in a large party about it; and though the pieces of meat and bones into which the poor animal was dissected, were by no means sightly or delicate, the whole was devoured without ceremony.

These people appeared to live on the most kind and amicable terms with each other, as if they formed but one large family. But the

silence of the camp was very oppressive, the human voice was not often heard, and the tread of the foot was scarcely distinguishable on the soft sand. The women sometimes passed the door of our abode, but they dared not stop even to gaze. One evening, as we were sitting in the tent and engaged in conversation, the curtain of Hassan's tent was slowly lifted up behind, and a dark hand, the wrist loaded with massive bracelets of silver and horn, made its appearance, and, soon after, the countenance of the young wife of Hassan. The girl gazed earnestly at the Christians, of whose nation she had probably never seen one before, and then pointed expressively to her eyes, and waved her hand to and fro: she imagined, no doubt, we were hakims or physicians, as the Arabs think every Christian is; and her eyes had been evidently injured, perhaps by the glare of the sunbeams on the sands. Mr. C. however, who had some knowledge of medicine, shook his head at the idea of meddling with the eyes of an Arab beauty; she looked very disappointed, but, the voice of Hassan being heard at no great dis-

tance, the curtain was instantly dropped, and she disappeared. Several times this interview was repeated: one or two parts of our dress attracted her extreme curiosity, particularly the frill of a shirt, which she pulled towards her dark eyes and examined minutely, and spoke earnestly in a tone of intreaty, and thinking it was removeable, strove to retain it; but the chief was at a distance on these occasions, or else his jealousy would have been excited.

Of all the evils that ever befel mankind, the confusion of tongues was surely one of the worst: it would have been a luxury to have been able to hold converse with this poor Arab bride, whose knowledge of the world was probably bounded by the rocks around the solitary encampment. But our companion's knowledge of Arabic was of little use on this occasion, as he stood in that singular apprehension of women, or of the consequences resulting from their presence here, that, the moment the girl put her head into the tent, he fled over the sand as if pursued by a wild beast.

But our captivity was soon to be put an end

to, and that by a singular and unexpected circumstance. In passing through Suez, we had an audience of the governor, and Ibrahim, a young Arab chief, had seen that we were courteously received: he was unwell, and begged some medicine, which Mr. C. gave him, and it proved of great benefit. One day, Mr. W. had strolled to the other end of the camp, and was astonished to meet with Ibrahim, who, travelling through the desert, had chanced to stop for a short time at this spot. The young man instantly inquired what could possibly have brought us there, and Mr. W. informed him of all the circumstances of our detention, at which he expressed great indignation, and the other offered him a present of some money on our joint account, if he would endeavour to procure our liberation. The prospect of the reward, and the gratitude which he really felt for the kindness shown him at Suez, conspired to induce him to use every effort to this end. He mounted his camel, and, though it was night, instantly rode off to the residence of his brother Saléh, who was the superior chief in the whole terri-

tory. Early the next morning, Saléh arrived in company with Ibrahim; and having sent word to the surrounding parts in the course of the day, above thirty sheiks had arrived in the camp, being an assembly, as Ibrahim expressed it in his Oriental style, of "all the great, the wise, and the glorious."

Their consultations now began; and it was very interesting to see them formed in a large circle on the sand, debating on the subject of our liberation; many of them were venerable men, with long beards descending on their breast. The dispute sometimes grew warm, and was accompanied with vehement action. Saléh, who was a man of mild and dignified aspect, had great influence over them: he was employed and trusted on some occasions by Mahmoud Ali, and was resolved we should be set at liberty; and all the chiefs, except the tribe of Hassan, seconded his opinion. "I know well," said Saléh, "that the English are favoured by the Pacha; their consul is his friend; and when he hears that you have taken some of this nation prisoners, he will send Turk-

ish soldiers to attack your camp, and either put you to death, or carry you and your families captives to Cairo." This chief spoke little, but seemed to listen attentively to the debates of the others, several of whom sometimes spoke at once in a loud tone of voice, while at other times the whole listened with deep attention to the discourse of one of their number. During the heat of the day they assembled in a large tent, and formed two long rows, at the head of which one of the sheiks presided. For a long time Hassan and his people sullenly refused to consent to set us free; and it was not till the evening of the second day that they were obliged to accede, and we were informed that on the following morning we were to depart. It was delightful news to us. The sheiks seated themselves at the door of our tent at night, and we sipped our coffee, smoked, and conversed in good fellowship. The chiefs then mounted their camels, and departed. Ibrahim, our friend, lingered behind the others. The scene was now entirely changed, and we felt how much sweeter it is to have a little power than to be subject to that of

others. Before their departure, the superior sheik requested us to write a letter to Cairo to the authorities, and to say, that whereas some persons, void of understanding, had taken us prisoners, the chief Saléh was resolved to have them punished. This, most probably, would never be done; or, at least, only on the young Arab who was about to give one of us the contents of his pistol at our first meeting them, and who was angrily menaced by Saléh. On the afternoon of the following day we left the camp, well mounted and attended; for Hassan, passing from one extreme to another, now resolved to conduct us himself to Cairo with his own camels and some of his people. We had not travelled many hours ere we arrived at a tent or two of a friend of the chief's, with whom we were to pass the night. Having supped, one or two songs were sung by the Arabs, and the evening passed pleasantly.

Franco had now joined us; and being relieved from all his fears, besides being refreshed by a good supper, commenced his German psalmody with great fervour, but was soon com-

pelled to stop by the Arabs, who never could abide the music of his voice.

It was useless now to think of returning to Mount Sinai, as we must have retraced our steps; so we resolved to proceed direct to Cairo. These Arabs sell their camels occasionally, and purchase corn and coffee at a cheap rate in Egypt. By their use of the brandy and sugar in our possession when they met with us, it appeared they would consume those articles with avidity, could they have them; but tea they disliked extremely. The camel of Hassan was a fine animal, much superior to any of the others. One day that Hassan was mounted on another camel, he was run off with over the desert at full speed, as far nearly as the eye could reach; and though a very strong man, he could not stop the animal. The only way on these occasions is to pass the bridle tightly over the nose, which instantly arrests their speed. On all occasions where swiftness is required, the dromedary is used, and very frequently by the Tartar messengers, who will travel night and day with incredible diligence.

In three days, travelling slowly, we reached the shores of the Red Sea: it is here a fine sheet of water, about ten miles broad. This is the place where the Israelites are supposed to have crossed. Directly opposite on the other side, the mountains, which above and below form a continued range, are divided; and, sloping gently down, leave a space or valley of about six miles broad, through which the Israelites passed on their way from Pihahiroth. Near the spot where we were, are the hot springs; they are several in number, and are warm enough to boil an egg in a few minutes. Our provisions had fallen very short; and two birds having lighted not far off, one of the Arabs shot them both at one fire with his matchlock gun, and Franco undertook to make a savoury stew of them; but, to our great disappointment, they had a flavour of carrion, and we were obliged to yield them up to Franco, who despatched them both with considerable *gout*.

A good part of the next day we passed in the small valley of Hirondel, covered with stunted

palm-trees, amongst which, and on the sand, a number of locusts were flying about. They were nearly as long as one's finger, very like a grasshopper, and of a light red colour. Michel joined us here with our effects from the convent, having quite recovered from his fever. The superior, who had bitterly bewailed our misfortune, exclaiming that no travellers would come again to the convent, if they were thus exposed to the rapacity of the Arabs, had spent several hours in his chamber every day during his illness, conversing with great avidity on the affairs of Greece. His solitude had not deadened his interest in the concerns of the world, with which he appeared to be well acquainted; and his manners showed that he had not always led a monastic life.

Departing for Suez, we fell in at night with a small caravan; and, a number of large fires being lighted, we passed the night together, and supped on a small deer or antelope, which had been shot by one of the Arabs.

The next day we met with a small party returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca: they had

travelled an immense distance. A Turk, the best-dressed of them, was seated in a houda. This is a light frame of wood, fixed on the back of a camel, with a seat on each side, and is a very easy and indolent mode of travelling. This Turk appeared to have been comforting himself in the howling wilderness with forbidden things, as we thought he was rather tipsy; but let not such a thing be lightly believed against one of the faithful, as it is certainly rare among them; though we afterwards met and dined with a rich Islamite merchant, who, if asked to drink wine, would be displeased at the mention of such a liquor, denied even to the Prophet, but, when it was presented to him as rosolio, the name of a sweet cordial, took off a large bumper with great heartiness.

In two days more we arrived at Suez, and again received a kind welcome from the Consul; and his good wine and dinner of Eastern dishes appeared uncommon luxuries to us, after such extreme privation. It being low water on our approaching Suez, we had forded the Red Sea on the camel's back, about a mile

above the town. The day after our capture by the Arabs, my servant had sent a camel from the convent to Cairo with intelligence of the circumstance; and the Consul being at Alexandria, as also was the Pacha, his secretary informed the Kiaya Bey, the chief officer of the latter, of the circumstance, and an order was instantly sent to the governor of Suez to despatch some of his troops to the Arab camp, to attack it and bring the Arabs prisoners, with ourselves, to Cairo. Our liberation, fortunately, was too early for the execution of this order; but the Arabs, who were eagle-eyed to discover all who pass on their deserts, would probably have been aware in time of the approach of the Turkish soldiers, and have struck their tents, mounted their camels, and fled with us into the heart of their deserts. The governor of Suez sent his son to wait on us, and to inquire into all the particulars, that he might transmit them to Cairo. In the former audience which he gave us, he had behaved very courteously; but the firmaun of the Grand

Seignior he threw on the sofa, and pressed that of Mahmoud Ali to his lips and forehead. We had found, indeed, in Upper Egypt the Sultan's passport to be so useless, that we ceased to produce it; for some of the sheiks do not scruple to call him a great beast. This Aga was a handsome and mild-looking man: he had only one wife, and no mistress; and his son stood before him with his hands folded on his breast.

Leaving Suez, we travelled on some hours; and, after dark, saw the lights of a caravan, that had halted on the sand. We joined the travellers, and found the scene rather interesting. They were seated in various parties round fires scattered over the desert, around the embers of which they at last lay down to repose. On the tenth day after leaving the Arab camp, we arrived at Cairo. Hassan, the chief, had grown very fearful, during the last two days, of entering the city, and entreated us earnestly to intercede, that the Pacha's anger might not fall upon him, as he knew well, he would think

as little of taking off his and his people's heads, as of taking a pinch of snuff. However, we took care that no harm happened to him, and parted from the chief, after all, with something like regret; for the deserts had made us intimate. We made him a present—a poor substitute for the ransom he had expected; and he went back again to his desolate valley. The transition from thence to our spacious apartment, garden, and fountain at Cairo, was very agreeable.

We had not the opportunity of making the tour of the whole of the region of Sinai, yet we traversed three sides of the mountain, and found it everywhere shut in by narrow ravines, except on the north, in which direction we had first approached it. Here there is, as before observed, a valley of some extent, and a small plain, in the midst of which is a rocky hill. These appear to be the only open places in which the Israelites could have stood before the mount, because on the fourth side, though unvisited, we could observe from the summit,

were only glens or small rocky valleys, as on the west and south; for the precipices opposite rose near and high: and a country like this can change little in the progress of ages. If water was not more plentiful of old than at the present time, it was impossible for so numerous a people to have been sustained without a constant miracle in their favour; the number of wells is so small, and in summer so soon exhausted.

Having hired a cangia, we parted from Mr. W. and went down the Nile to Alexandria.—With some eccentricities, arising from ignorance of the world, he was an amiable and excellent man. To his knowledge of Arabic chiefly were we indebted for our own liberation from the deserts. Mr. C. took passage for England. My stay at Alexandria was rendered more pleasant by the hospitality and attentions of Mr. Lee, the Consul, which every traveller experiences in an eminent degree. Christmas-day was celebrated at his house by a large party and an excellent entertainment, and it

passed most agreeably. Yet the weather felt so chill in the afternoon, it being January, that we were glad to assemble round the fire. Intending to proceed to Palestine and Syria, I engaged a passage in a vessel of the latter country bound to Saide.

LETTER XII.

PALESTINE—SYRIA.

We left Alexandria with a fair breeze, and the prospect of a speedy passage; the voyage to Saide being often accomplished in three days. But on the second day the wind became adverse, and we were compelled to drive up and down off the Egyptian coast, as if we were never to lose sight of it. The captain had been imprisoned some days at Alexandria for some offence; and as the vessel could not proceed without him, I interceded with the Consul, and procured his liberty. He was grateful for this, and gave me the best accommodations in the ship, which was no small advantage, as there were several other passengers on board. On the floor of the cabin was stretched a Jewish rabbi, in his last sick-

ness; he was a very well-informed man, and was intimately known to Lady Hester Stanhope. His chief desire, and the only object of his voyage, was to go to Palestine to die, which was very soon accomplished, as he lived but a few days after our arrival. He had travelled, and was well versed in the Scriptures, and all the traditions of his people; and related with great pleasure how he had foiled in a public argument in Egypt a missionary who was sent for the conversion of his brethren. The calms and baffling winds annoyed us exceedingly: the Jew bore them patiently, but not equally so with a Turk, who had laid his carpet on the deck, on which he continued seated nearly all the day, and stretched by night; his pipe in his hand, some very coarse provisions for his food, and those used very sparingly. He regarded the vicissitudes of the weather with perfect tranquillity, only uttering occasionally, "The will of God be done!" Had the vessel gone to pieces, he would have shown, probably, neither surprise nor despair. On the tenth day, however, we were cheered by the sight of Mount Carmel, and

drew slowly near its foot; and soon were landed in the boat at the small town of Caifa, while the bark pursued its voyage to Saide.

Having gone through the ceremony of being examined by the Turkish officer, there being a war at that time in the country, we were allowed to look out for a lodging. The town had but a sorry appearance, and consisted chiefly of one long street, with the governor's house at the end. There had been a Catholic convent in a noble situation on the side of Carmel; but it was destroyed not very long before by the young Pacha of Acre, and was now only a heap of ruins. The poor solitary priest who tenanted it was expelled his comfortable home, and at present occupied a small house in the town beneath, where he gave us a cordial reception. It was a sorry dwelling, and a wretched substitute for his roomy and delightful convent, where he was lord of the whole domain. He possessed two apartments; the dark kitchen conducted by a crazy flight of stairs into a small eating and sleeping apartment, with a large open window that looked over the whole bay. After a long

delay he produced a repast, consisting of eggs, cheese, and some tolerable wine. On the wall the names of two travellers were pencilled, who had lodged in this apartment, a Mr. Hyde, whose journeyings have been very extensive, and another Englishman. The old priest and Michel discussed their wine below in the evening very sociably: the former was full of some news lately arrived from Italy; of the Pope having had a long and particular conference with St. Peter, and of the wonderful revelations the apostle had made. In the night it blew very hard, and the rain and wind sadly invaded the privacy of the father's chamber.

We were obliged to go very early in the morning to the governor's secretary, to procure a passport for Acre. The Turk had just risen from his slumbers, and seemed much out of humour and uncomfortable, as the air was chill, and he had not had his cup of coffee. We at last left Caifa, remarkable for nothing but the beauty of many of the children in the streets; and proceeded towards Acre. The whole of the route is over the sandy beach, and it was crossed

by a rapid stream, which, owing to the late heavy rains, was scarcely fordable.

Having reached Acre about mid-day, we were compelled to wait three hours before any admittance could be obtained, as the young Pacha was in his seraglio, and they dared not disturb him. During this interval, some rogue stole my umbrella and a solitary bottle of rum, neither of which could be replaced, and the former was a serious loss in such a climate. At last, to our great relief, admission was granted, and we proceeded to the convent, and met there with Mr. A. the consul-general for Syria, but newly arrived from England, and my old travelling companion, Mr. W.

The next morning, in company with Mr. W. and a merchant of Aleppo, we left Acre for Tyre. The way led for some distance over the fine and extensive plain, at the end of which the town is situated; it was varied, as we drew nearer the hills, by two or three chateaux of Turkish gentlemen amidst the trees; and about mid-day we halted at a rivulet, and made a pleasant repast. The merchant was a very unprincipled

but agreeable fellow, and, being a native of Aleppo, spoke Arabic and Turkish beautifully. We soon ascended a lofty hill, over which the path is exceedingly delightful and commanding. The plain of Acre was behind, and Tyre visible on the shore a considerable distance in advance; and the bold and craggy cliffs we were ascending repaid the toil of the way.

Towards evening we came to a small and lonely khan, and resolved to make it our lodging for the night. Some Syrian peasants gathered round, and we took our evening meal under the rude corridor, while the moon shone splendidly on the bay and shore, close to which the khan stood. Such moments as these are full of vivid enjoyment. Before daybreak we quitted this spot, and in a few hours arrived at Tyre.

This town, by no means so desolate as it has been sometimes represented, contains nearly two thousand inhabitants, and is surrounded by a wall. We put up at the Catholic convent, if it deserves the name,—some wretched small apartments in the sides of a court. In

the evening the fathers disturbed us by their nasal singing in the church, which is open to the winds of heaven, having scarcely any roof. There are a few good houses in the place, and, visiting two or three families, we were made welcome with a pipe, a cup of coffee, or other drink. The island on which the ancient city stood, has of course long since disappeared.

The next morning we set out for Sidon; the weather was beautiful, and we enjoyed an agreeable ride. This town is very pleasantly situated, and surrounded with rich gardens. We took up our abode in some apartments belonging to the French consul, with naked walls and floor:—the traveller here, as throughout the East, must bring his own utensils and bedding with him; but fatigue and novelty sweeten all things. In the evening we paid a visit to a merchant's family of Sidon; and some sweet Oriental dishes, prepared by the lady of the house, with some excellent wine, were served up. The gardens of Sidon were full of fruit, and the cottages of the peasants stood in the midst of them.

At about an hour and a half's ride from the town is the residence of Lady Hester Stanhope. It is situated on the top of a hill, and called Marilius, from the convent of that name that formerly stood there, and out of part of which, with her own additions, she has constructed her present mansion. There are few trees round it, and it is very exposed: in the back-ground are ranges of barren hills; the prospect beneath, of the gardens of Sidon and the bay, is magnificent. Having two letters of introduction to her ladyship, one from an intimate friend, I made sure of an interview; but, as ill-luck would have it, my servant in his haste left this letter in the apartment at Sidon, and the one which was presented would not avail me. In the small room where I was introduced was suspended an immense Arab lance. In a short time, the only English inmate, Miss W. brought a polite apology from her ladyship, intimating that she regretted she could not break her invariable rule not to see English travellers. Having afterwards understood from the consul that I possessed her

friend's letter, she favoured me with two notes, saying that she should be happy to receive it and see the bearer if he came that way again: but, being then at a considerable distance from her residence, the pleasure of such an interview was never enjoyed.

This extraordinary woman no longer possesses the daring and chivalric spirit which led her to Palmyra and other perilous parts of the East. She is now become very nervous, and has for some time put great faith in nativities, and the productions of a venerable Arabian, who passes for an astrologer or magician, and often visits Marilius. Her habits of life have long been not to retire to rest till five in the morning, and to rise at two in the afternoon, and eat scarcely any animal food; but her house contains a good store of choice wines, and the various conserves of the East. Although she sits on the floor, and eats with her fingers, her visitor is indulged with a table, knife and fork, and a variety of dishes. Her household consists of three-and-twenty Arab servants of both sexes, as her English ones

have long since been dismissed. She scarcely ever rides now, although she has a stud of twelve fine Arabian horses. In conversation, as a friend of hers, who several times visited her, assured me, she is very agreeable; but it must be during the witching hours of night, when her ladyship loves most to converse. Arabic she speaks pretty well, and with the natives and manners of the East she is of course thoroughly acquainted. Among Turkish women, she says, she has met many admirable and attractive characters, but among the Greeks not a single one. Woe be to the woman of her own nation, who should reside for a short time at Marilius! she must expect to submit to all the seclusion of the land, as, if any sheik or Turk comes to the house, she must not only shun his presence, but be sure not to let a glimpse of her face be seen: no infringement on Eastern etiquette can ever be allowed there.

The influence this lady has over the surrounding pachas and governors is truly singular. A merchant of my acquaintance from

Smyrna was returning from Damascus to Beirout with some camel loads of silk: they were stopped in the way by the Pacha of Acre, who intended to use no ceremony in making them his own. The merchant was in partnership in this concern with a rich Moor at Beirout, who was intimately known to her ladyship, and immediately wrote to her requesting her interference. She sent a note to the pacha, and an order was speedily transmitted to his soldiers to set the camels and their cargo at liberty.

Lady Stanhope lived at Damascus for twelve months in a handsome house in the suburbs; and often, when she rode out in her Mameluke dress, the people would flock around her in admiration. When on her "journey to Palmyra, she was pursued by a hostile tribe of Arabs for a whole day; and on the day when the Palmyrenes hailed her as the Queen of the ruined city, she felt, no doubt, vivid and undissembled pleasure, being the first lady who had ever achieved such a journey; and her excellent horsemanship and capability of enduring fatigue, soon made the deserts a home to her.

The Orientals never speak of her but with the highest respect." It is certain that a belief is entertained of her being of the highest rank: some even say she is a queen. She distributes occasionally presents of rich arms to the chiefs; and, when an Arab courser is sent her, frequently rewards the bearer with a thousand piastres. She is generous, hospitable, and undoubtedly of that superior and commanding mind, which is sure to gain an ascendancy among the Orientals. Yet it is difficult to discover any attractions in her present way of life at Marilius. The romance and delight of exploring the East, and seeing its natives bow down to her, have long since given place to timid and secluded habits and feelings, and the dreams of superstition. She is, however, firmly resolved never to return to her native country; her avowed contempt for her own sex, and their effeminate habits and feelings, is not likely to conciliate them.

Although she refuses, from the real or supposed ill treatment of one or two English travellers, to see any of her countrymen, she has

more than once been their benefactor. On one occasion she presented a traveller at Damascus with two thousand piastres, whose money had failed him in a journey from India. When an unfortunate Frenchman, a man of science, was shot by some Arabs from behind the rocks, as he was sketching a scene in some of the mountains in the interior at a considerable distance, she was at a great expense in recovering his papers and books for his relations, and procuring for them every intelligence.

On the following day we proceeded to Beirout, and in a couple of hours came to a miserable khan; then passing over a sandy tract, at the close of day we entered the pleasant and shady lanes leading to Beirout, which look very much like English ones. Being recommended to the house of M. Massad, a native, I proceeded thither, and ascending a flight of steps, entered a small paved court, with apartments all round it. My abode here would have pleased the most fastidious taste: the apartment had three windows in front, which looked over the town and gardens, and Mount

Lebanon at three miles distance, its interior summits covered with snow; and the window in the end looked over the bay. Massad was a respectable-looking old man; he had two sons and one daughter, who went about the house with a dozen strings of gold coins dangling about her ears and neck. Our table was provided with as fine beef from Mount Lebanon as could be had in England, and excellent wine. At least a dozen sorts of wine are produced from this mountain and its neighbourhood, red and white: among the latter the Vindoro is one of the best; they are all cheap enough. This town, the ancient Berytus, contains six thousand inhabitants: the situation is the most beautiful of all the Syrian towns; the environs are laid out in plantations of mulberry-trees, and a quantity of silk is produced and exported.

The war between the two Pachas of Acre and Damascus at this time disturbed the whole country, and rendered travelling very unsafe. The exactions and oppressions of the former harrass the people excessively. An instance of this occurred at Sidon a week after my arrival.

The Pacha sent to a Turkish gentleman of property there, to demand a very large advance, which he refused to pay, but soon received intelligence that more summary means would be adopted. He knew there was no time to be lost; assembled his few faithful servants, and, after taking a very affecting leave of his wife, whom he tenderly loved, rode off to Damascus, carrying with him the most valuable and portable part of his property. The day after, the Pacha's officer arrived from Acre and seized all the effects that were left behind, without, however, insulting the lady, who could not accompany the rapid flight of her husband. This young Chief of Acre is capable of any enormity, and has bribed the Prince of the Druses to assist him in his war with the Damascenes.

The Consul, Mr. A., had now arrived at Beirout; and, having procured an excellent house, I resided with him for a few weeks very agreeably. This house was built by a Greek merchant, at a considerable expense, for his own residence: when the Governor of Beirout, which is in the Pashalic of Acre, sent to order him to

deliver it up, as he wished to inhabit it himself. The merchant, terrified, fled to the interior of Mount Lebanon, where I afterwards met with him. Just at this time the Consul arrived; and, the house being unoccupied, he demanded it for his own use; and the Governor, after much altercation, thought proper to concede it. The poor merchant sent a most grateful letter to Mr. A. for preserving his house from the hands of the Governor.

A great number of granite pillars, in a broken state, however, are to be seen along the shore beneath the tide, and part of the causeway on the quay is chiefly built up with them. About four hundred years ago Faccardine, the Prince of the Druses, possessed a handsome palace and gardens without the town. This man's history has been written; for he was a remarkable character, and had spent some time in Italy, where he cultivated the sciences, and built his palace after the edifices he had admired there. He was assassinated, and his beautiful domain laid waste; some of the ruins, however, still remain.

The rainy season had now set in: scarcely

a day passed without showers; and the roads were rendered so bad that travelling was impracticable. Rain in an Oriental country throws a traveller sadly out of his resources: books, of course, he has few, but must pass the evenings sitting on the divan with a vessel of lighted charcoal before him on the carpet, and his pipe and a cup of coffee. At last, however, the weather cleared up; the caravans, which had been stopped, resumed their passage, and we set out to visit the Emir Busheer, Prince of the Druses. The way was for the most part over the mountain; and in about nine hours we came to the town of Dalil Camar, and were fain to pass the night in a coffee-house.

Early the next morning we went to the chief's residence, which is admirably situated for defence: it stands on a rugged cliff, and is approached by a winding path over low stone steps. Industry, however, has created a sort of garden on one side of it. Some apartments of the palace are rather elegantly fitted up, and furnished with glass windows. It is surrounded by extensive courts, around which are

the rooms for the officers and domestics. The power of this prince is very considerable; extending all over Mount Lebanon and many of the adjacent parts. In a short space of time he can raise thirty thousand armed men: and these mountaineers are bolder troops than those of the lowlands; a large proportion of them are horsemen. He had brought several thousands into the field to aid the Pacha of Acre in his war with the Pacha of Damascus. On being introduced to the Emir, he was seated on the divan of a large apartment—a man about sixty, of a venerable appearance, with a long beard, almost white, in which he took great pride. Sherbet and pipes were brought, and we were invited to remain for the night at the palace. He dissuaded me from advancing to Balbec, in consequence of the war, and the armies being out, which rendered the road insecure. The snow also had fallen in such quantities as to make any progress in that direction impossible. This man has a religion to suit the place he may be in: when he comes down to

Beirout, he goes to the mosque; but in the mountain he is always a Christian.

During my stay in the latter place, I accompanied the Consul in his first visit of ceremony to the Turkish Governor. After refreshments, the latter was presented with an English watch, which he first made a show of refusing, but at last grasped at with no small avidity. The watch was of mixed metal, as the Turks will not accept of any gold or silver; the Prophet having forbidden the use of those precious metals on some occasions. It was made, with five or six others, for the express purpose of presents to these chiefs. This governor took great pleasure in the idea of our being all, by and by, of one faith, and repeated several times with delight, "We shall all be Moslemen together in Damascus:" as they have a tradition of long standing, that the Christians will advance with a mighty army to attack the sacred city, when the Prophet, in his mercy, will convert them all.

About mid-day, being invited to dine with the

chief officers of the Prince, we formed a circle round a low table, on which were placed a number of dishes, with an immense pilau of rice in the middle, coloured with saffron; we were furnished with neat spoons for eating our food—a refinement not always to be found at Eastern meals. While at Beirout I dined one day with a rich merchant, a Moor, and a very handsome man: he possessed a young Circassian mistress, about sixteen years of age, for whom he had given six hundred pounds at Smyrna; this was rather a dear bargain, as she was not beautiful. We sat on the carpet, four in number, and drank tea in the first place, which was made by the Moor, and served without milk; immediately afterwards dinner was brought in:—first, a dish of soup was placed in the middle of the table, and, being each provided with a spoon, we helped ourselves out of the vessel in common; this being removed, an excellent hash supplied its place; and, the spoons being taken away, we plunged our fingers into the dish, and carried whatever came first, meat, vegetables, &c. to our mouths, as there were no plates. Several other

dishes succeeded, all very good; and the repast was closed by some delicious cakes, made, no doubt, by the hands of the young Circassian. A most diligent washing of the hands and mouth then took place; and, indeed, it was necessary.

Having quitted the palace or fortress of the Emir, we returned to the town of Dalil Camar to wait till the roads should become passable by the melting of the snow. Our lodging was a small room in the khan, in the upper story; several merchants occupied the adjoining rooms, and they set out their goods for sale during the day-time in the court below. This part of Mount Lebanon was very barren and craggy, and the houses rose in ridges on its sides.

There are a great number of Druses in and around this place. The belief and some of the rites of this singular race are but imperfectly known. They are a fine and healthy-looking people; particularly many of the young women, who have a complexion as ruddy as those of the Highlands of Scotland. The Druses never allow intermarriages with strangers, and not

unfrequently marry their sisters and daughters. Several of their small houses of worship are scattered over the mountain, but no stranger is allowed to enter. It is computed there are eighty convents on various parts of the mountain, Armenian, Catholic, Greek, and Maronite; and they are often placed in situations of extraordinary beauty. It has been observed by some, that the Syrian coast is very subject to fevers; but it is difficult, perhaps, to find a line of country more healthy and attractive than that from Tripoli to Acre. Lady Stanhope has declared the climate to be the most salubrious that she has ever resided in.

Having waited in vain for ten days, and the weather being worse instead of better, we resolved to bend our course towards Palestine; and, having procured horses, arrived on the evening of the following day at Sidon again. We passed the evening very pleasantly in the apartments of Monsieur T., an Italian merchant, who has resided there several years with his lady: a dreary situation for an intelligent man; for what climate or scenery can atone for the

want of society? In three days more the weather became fine; and we left the town with no small pleasure, being impatient to proceed, after so many delays. Soon after sunset we came once more to the gate of Tyre, and found a warm welcome from the Tyrian family whom we had become acquainted with on our first visit. They were all seated on the floor round the supper-table, parents, sons, and daughters, and we felt no objection to join the party. How delightful was an animated scene like this—the soft cushion and the pipe after a long and fatiguing journey! No traveller in the East, accustomed to the indulgent and natural posture of sitting and reclining there, will ever wish to see a chair or table again.

Continuing our journey, we were late on the following day a few miles from Acre, and were obliged to stop at an Arab village on a hill; and, entering the rude and dirty khan, found it filled with the inhabitants, who were ranged, as thick as they could well be crammed, on the floor, with their backs to the wall, and every mouth filled with a pipe. A

fire was blazing beside a pillar in the middle; but the place looked so suspicious and uninviting, that we were at a loss whether to remain or not. In a short time the Sheik stepped up, and civilly invited us to lodge in his house, which we very gladly acceded to. His residence was close to the sea: and that we might not approach too near the persons of his women, he conducted us to a neat and lofty apartment a few yards from the house; the walls and pillars were whitewashed, and some mats spread on the floor. He asked if his women should prepare a repast for us, or if we chose to dress it ourselves. On our preferring the former, in about an hour a very decent meal made its appearance, round which we all assembled. The Sheik, to do me honour, took up the choicest pieces of meat with his fingers and placed them before me: to have declined eating them would have given offence. After supper, to entertain us, he placed his hands on his knees, and broke out into a most stunning and discordant song, and then got up and went through

all his prayers and genuflexions with much appearance of devotion. We soon, however, lay down to rest, free from any intrusion or sound, save the dashing of the sea on the rocks beneath our dwelling.

LETTER XIII.

PALESTINE.

On the following day we came again to Caifa, and found an agreeable lodging in the house of a native, more comfortable and luxurious than the room of the old priest. We ascended the side of Carmel next to the sea, into which it almost descends; and on this part of its summit tradition says Elijah the prophet stood when he prayed for rain, and beheld the cloud rise out of the sea. The next day we ascended the mountain in another part, and traversed the whole of its summit, which occupied several hours. It is the finest and most beautiful mountain in Palestine, of great length, and in many parts covered with trees and flowers. On reaching at last the opposite

summit, and coming out of a wood, we saw the celebrated plain of Esdraelon beneath, with the river Kishon flowing through it: Mounts Tabor and Hermon were in front, and on the left the prospect was bounded by the hills of Samaria. This scene certainly did not fulfil the descriptions given of the desolation and barrenness of Palestine: although it was mournful to behold scarcely a village or cottage in the whole extent; yet the soil appeared so rich and verdant, that, if diligently cultivated, there is little doubt it would become, as it once was, "like the garden of the Lord."

We stood some time gazing with great delight, and then began to descend the side of the mountain, leaving Hassan, our guide, behind, with the horses, cursing the ruggedness and difficulty of the paths. About half way down we met a tribe of Arab gipsies; they had just pitched their tents, and pressed us to stay and take coffee, and even remain all night with them. The accommodations were certainly far from tempting. A young woman of the party had her lips dyed blue, a custom probably

among them. We soon reached the banks of the Kishon, at this time so much swollen by the heavy rains that we could not find a ford to cross over; by going much lower down, however, we at last succeeded, and crossing part of the plain, wound up the hills till the night fell, and we were glad enough to meet with a lodging in a wretched Arab village.

On the following day we arrived at Nazareth, which we could not perceive till we were at the top of the hill directly over it, as it stands on the foot and sides of a kind of amphitheatre. Its situation is very romantic; the population amounts to about twelve hundred, who are mostly Christians. The Spanish Catholic convent, in which all travellers are accommodated, is a large and excellent mansion, though the number of monks is reduced to less than one half, on account of the poverty of the establishment, from the failure of remittances from Europe. The church of the convent is rich, and contains a fine organ. Below the floor, and entered by a flight of steps, is the cave or grotto where the angel Gabriel is said

to have appeared to Mary: a granite column was rent in twain by the appearance of the angel,—the lower part is quite gone, but the upper part, which passes through the roof, is suspended in the air. The priests tell you that it has no support from above, and that it is an everlasting miracle. There is a handsome altar in this grotto.

We next visited a small apartment which is shown as the workshop of Joseph: this stands at a short distance from the church; part of it only remains, and is certainly kept very neat. Not far from this is the school where our Lord received his education, and which looks much like other schools. But as curious a relic as any, is a large piece of rock, rather soft, about four feet high, and four or five yards long, its form not quite circular: on this our Lord is said to have often dined with his disciples.

About a mile and a half down the valley is shown a high and perpendicular rock, as the very spot where our Lord, according to St. Luke, was taken by the people to be thrown over the precipice. About midway down, in

the face of the rock, is the spot where his descent was arrested, and the marks of his hands and part of his form are shown, where he entered into the rock and disappeared. The good fathers do their cause little good by such sad tales. But of far higher interest than traditions and relics is the scenery around Nazareth: it is of the kind in which one would imagine the Saviour of mankind delighted to wander and to withdraw himself when meditating on his great mission;—deep and secluded dells, covered with a wild verdure; silent and solemn paths where overhanging rocks shut out all intrusion.

No one can walk round Nazareth without feeling thoughts like these enter his mind, while gazing often on many a sweet spot, traced perhaps by the Redeemer's footsteps, and embalmed by his prayers.

The next day we rode to Mount Tabor, about six miles distant; it stands alone on the plain, and is a very small and beautiful mountain, rising gradually on every side: about the fourth part of the ascent towards the summit is

covered with a luxuriance of wood. The top of Mount Tabor is flat, and not of large extent; the view from thence is most magnificent. At the foot is shown the village, amidst a few trees, that was the birth-place of Deborah the prophetess. Hermon stands in the plain about six miles off, and at its foot is the village of Nain.

We next proceeded towards Cana by a narrow and rocky path over the mountains. This village is pleasantly situated on a small eminence in a valley, and contains two or three hundred inhabitants; the ruins of the house are still shown, where the miracle of turning the water into wine was performed. The same kind of stone waterpots are certainly in use in the village: we saw several of the women bearing them on their heads as they returned from the well. The young women of Cana are said to be handsome.

As the light was fading, we returned to the convent, and enjoyed our comfortable cell and repast. Here for the first time we ate the delicious fish caught in the lake of Tiberias; they

are very much of the size and colour of mullet. Being admitted to an audience of the superior, the old man bewailed bitterly the dreadful degeneracy of the age, and departure from the faith, as shown particularly in the revolution of New Spain, whereby the revenues of the convent were so reduced:—the Devil, he said, was active and powerful beyond belief in the present day. What grieves the monks the most is, that they cannot live half so well as they used to do:—the wine was very bad;—however, I gave some comfort to one of the fathers, by buying at his own price a small piece, really scarcely visible, of the body of St. Francis, carefully secured in a small inclosure of glass.

Leaving Nazareth, we reached again the foot of Carmel, and afterwards wound along the coast, passing by the site of Cæsarea. On the second night, we were obliged to halt early at the khan of a village on the sea-shore, there being no other resting-place for a considerable distance. It was yet hot in the afternoon, and the sun found its way through the shattered roof of the khan; the shore was open and dreary,

and not a rock to afford any shadow. Towards evening, however, some other travellers arrived from various parts, soldiers and merchants; fires were lighted, parties assembled round them, and the khan assumed a cheerful aspect. One of the company, wishing to give me a proof of his respect, seized a piece of meat out of the dish he was eating from, and, though he was seated ten yards off, flung it through the air towards me, requesting very civilly my acceptance of it. The pipe, cup of coffee, and conversation followed; and people who never saw each other before, soon became intimate.

Early next day we quitted this village. The path along this part of the coast was dangerous, being infested by robbers: it offered, however, nothing either to annoy or delight us, for it was barren and uninteresting; and in the evening we came again to a wretched village, where the small khan was crowded to excess by two or three sheiks and their followers, and we were obliged to seek a lodging in a miserable cottage about half a mile further on. With feelings of no small pleasure, on the succeeding day, after

some hours travelling, we beheld Jaffa at a short distance. The route to Jerusalem by the way of Naplouse would have been much pleasanter than the one we had been compelled to adopt; but it had become the seat of war. The gardens around are very pretty, and surrounded with hedges of the prickly pear, which is found all over the coast of Syria; oranges, melons, and other fruits were in abundance.

We found a hospitable reception at the house of Signor Damiani, the consul, who gave us a very good supper, but without a drop of wine, as he was too zealous a Christian to allow it in his house in Lent time: and the quantities of cold water Michel and I were obliged to drink after a sultry day's journey, made us wish the signor had had no more religion than the naked Dervise whom he thrashed so unmercifully one day after inveigling him into his garden. He told us several entertaining stories about Bonaparte, who had sat and chatted on the same sofa on which we were sitting. He praised the Emperor to the skies, though his arrival had nearly ruined him, and he had been compelled to go

with him some distance as a guide. Travellers would be sadly at a loss but for the signor's house, though this illustrious sofa swarms with fleas. His appearance is rather singular, as he wears the Eastern dress, and an English cocked hat over it in token of his office.

About ten yards distant, and in his own domain, is a dark and naked room that is shown as having been the residence of Simon Peter the tanner, and has one or two miraculous pillars in it. The appearance of Jaffa is singular, being situated on so steep a declivity, that the houses almost climb over each other up the face of the hill.

We were now only twelve hours' journey from Jerusalem, and rode to Ramha early on the following day: this place is finely situated on an extensive plain, and has some woods and olive-trees around it. There is a Catholic convent here, which a clever Spanish monk has all to himself; he behaved, however, so uncivilly, that we sought a lodging elsewhere, for which we were indebted to the kindness of a native. In the evening we received a polite invitation from

the Armenian convent to visit them, and found a luxurious little habitation with five or six very pleasant fathers; they served us with some excellent spiced coffee and cakes, and, the superior being absent, began to talk thoroughly like men of the world. The Armenians, as we found on more than one occasion afterwards, are the most gentlemanly monks of all, and allow themselves the greatest latitude.

By moonlight next morning, we were on the way to the sacred city: for about three hours it led over the plain, and then ascending the hills, became excessively disagreeable, in some parts so narrow that one horse only could proceed at a time, and that not always with safety, as the rains had made the rocky paths much worse than usual. At the end of nine hours, however, as we proceeded over the summit of a rugged hill, we beheld Jerusalem at a small distance before us. Its aspect certainly was not magnificent or inspiring, but sad and dreary.

On reaching the gate of Bethlehem, we were speedily admitted, and after some research procured a lodging in the house of a native, not far

from the walls, and near the tower of David. We had had enough of convents, and a traveller will find himself much more agreeably situated, and more at his ease, in living orientally, than confined within the walls and obliged to conform to the hours of a monastery. However, there is no avoiding one's fate. I had my divan and coffee, excellent wine, and music in the evening, and wished only to remain in peace. But in a day or two repeated messages came from the superior of the convent, urging my entry into it: it was so unusual for a traveller to lodge without, and so unsafe in those times, and he would come himself to remonstrate with me; so that I was fain to comply. An unlucky letter from the convent of Constantinople, and an unwillingness to lose the fees which every traveller pays, were the causes of this civility. They put me there into a little cold cell, with a single chair and table in it, and a small flock bed, as if I came to perform a pilgrimage; and the pictures of saints and martyrs on the walls were poor consolations for the substantial comforts I had lost. Here, however, it was my good fortune to

meet with a most amiable traveller, a Mr. G., an Irish gentleman, whose companion had just left him for Europe.

The morning after my arrival was a very lovely one; and, though it was in February, perfectly warm. I passed out of the gate of Bethlehem, and traversing part of the ravine beneath, ascended the Mount of Judgement, on the south side of the city. How interesting was her aspect, beheld over the deep and rocky valley of Hinnom! her gloomy walls encompassing Mount Zion on every side; and as yet there was no sound to disturb the silence of the scene. The beautiful Mount of Olives was on the right, and at its feet the Valley of Jehoshaphat, amidst whose great rocks and trees stood the tomb of Zacharias, the last of the prophets that was slain: the only stream visible, flowed from the fountain of Siloam, on the side of Zion opposite. It is true, the city beloved of God has disappeared, and with it all the hallowed spots once contained within its walls: and keen must be the faith that can now embrace their identity. Yet the face of Nature still endures: the rocks,

the mountains, lakes and valleys are unchanged, save that loneliness and wildness are now, where once were luxury and every joy; and though their glory is departed, a high and mournful beauty still rests on many of these silent and romantic scenes. Amidst them a stranger will ever delight to wander, for there his imagination can seldom be at fault; the naked mountain, the untrodden plain, and the voiceless shore, will kindle into life around him, and his every step be filled with those deeds, through which guilt and sorrow passed away, and "life and immortality were brought to light."

The day had become hot ere I returned to my dwelling, just within the walls. It was the most desirable time of the year to be at Jerusalem, as the feast of Easter was about to commence, and many of the pilgrims had arrived. The streets of the city are very narrow and ill-paved, and the houses in general have a mean appearance. The bazaar is a very ordinary one. The Armenian quarter is the only agreeable part of the city: the convent, which stands near the gate of Zion, is very spacious and handsome,

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with a large garden attached to it, and can furnish accommodations for eight hundred pilgrims within its walls; the poorer part lodging in outhouses and offices in the courts, while the richer find every luxury and comfort, for all the apartments in this convent are furnished in the oriental manner. The wealthy pilgrims never fail to leave a handsome present, to the amount sometimes of several hundred pounds. If a pilgrim dies in the convent, all the property he has with him goes to the order. The church is very rich, and ornamented in a very curious taste, the floor being covered, as is the case in all their religious edifices, with a handsome carpet.

The lower division of the city, towards the east, is chiefly occupied by the Jews: it is the dirtiest and most offensive of all. Several of this people, however, are rather affluent, and live in a very comfortable style; both men and women are more attractive in their persons than those of their nation who reside in Europe, and their features are not so strongly marked with the indelible Hebrew characters, but much more mild and interesting. But few passengers, in

general, are met with in the streets, which have the aspect, where the convents are situated, of fortresses, from the height and strength of the walls the monks have thought necessary for their defence. Handsomely dressed persons are seldom seen, as the Jews and Christians rather study to preserve an appearance of poverty, that they may not excite the jealousy of the Turks.

The population of Jerusalem has been variously stated; but it can hardly exceed twenty thousand; ten thousand of these are Jews, five thousand Christians, and the same number of Turks. The walls can with ease be walked round on the outside in forty-five minutes, as the extent is scarcely three miles.

On the east of the city runs the valley or glen of Jehoshaphat; that of Hinnom, which bounds the city, on the south and west: and into these descend the steep sides of Mount Zion, on whose surface the city stands. To the north extends the plain of Jeremiah, the only level space around; it is covered partly with olive-trees. It does not appear possible for the ancient city to

have covered a larger space than the present, except by stretching to the north, along the plain of Jeremiah; because the modern walls are built nearly on the brink of the declivities of Zion and the adjoining hill. But the height of this hill is very small, for Jerusalem is on every side, except towards the north, overlooked by hills, higher than the one whereon it stands. When about mid-way up Mount Olivet, you are on a level with the city walls; and the disparity towards the south is still greater. The form of the town is more like that of a square than any other, and its walls are lofty and strong. There are five or six gates: the golden gate, the gates of Damascus, St. Stephen, and Zion, and that of Bethlehem. Close to the latter is the tower of David, a place of considerable strength.

The circumstance that most perplexes every traveller is, to account for Mount Calvary's having been formerly without the city. It is at present not a small way within; and in order to shut it out, the ancient walls must have made the most extraordinary and unnecessary

curve imaginable. Its elevation was probably always inconsiderable, so that there is little to stagger one's faith in the lowness of its present appearance. The exclusion of Calvary must have deprived the ancient city of a considerable space of habitable ground, of which, from the circumscribed nature of its site, there could have been little to spare. But tradition could not err in the identity of so famous a spot: and the smallest scepticism would deprive it of all its powerful charm. Besides that, the disposition of the former Jerusalem appears to have been, in other parts, sufficiently irregular.

The mosque of Omar, the most beautiful edifice in the Turkish empire, stands, in a great measure, on the site occupied by Solomon's Temple. The area around it is spacious and delightful; and being planted with trees, affords the only agreeable promenade in the city. Christians, however, are never allowed to enter it. Its situation is little elevated above the level of the street, so that Mount Moriah, formerly the highest eminence that joined the

city, and where the temple stood, is now shorn of its honours. The loftiest part of the town at present is the western, between the gates of Bethlehem and Zion, where the convents are situated.

The sides of the hill of Zion have a pleasing aspect, as they possess a few olive-trees and rude gardens, and a crop of corn was at this time growing there. On its southern extremity, a short way from the wall, is the mosque of David, which is held in the highest reverence by the Turks, who affirm that the remains of that monarch, and his son Solomon, were interred here, and that their tombs still exist. In a small building attached to the mosque, and where a church formerly stood, is the room in which was held the last supper of our Lord and his disciples: we looked into it through some crevices; it had a mean and naked appearance.

Being now an inmate of the Catholic convent, the best plan was to make oneself as happy as circumstances would allow, and these were scanty enough. The fathers were of the Fran-

ciscan order, dirty, sullen, and wretchedly clad; and their wine, which Chateaubriand praises so highly, is execrable. Father Giuseppe, indeed, was the cicerone of the order; a little, amusing, time-pléasing monk, who had a decent little cell, where he kept some excellent cordial, and other comforts, and had one or two saints frying upon gridirons, pasted on the walls. Each of these fathers cleaned his own apartment, made his bed, and was indebted to no one's service.

Having agreed with Father G. to visit the church of the Hòly Sepulchre, we went there in the evening, and, passing through the court, entered the first lofty apartment. There was a guard of Turks in a recess just within the door, to whom every pilgrim is obliged to pay a certain sum for admission; but we were exempted from this tax. In the middle of the first apartment is a large marble slab, raised above the floor, over which lamps are suspended: this is said to be the space where the body of the Redeemer was anointed and prepared for the sepulchre. You then turn to the

left, and enter the large rotunda, which terminates in a dome at the top. In the centre of the floor stands the holy sepulchre; it is of an oblong form, and composed of a very fine reddish stone brought from the Red Sea, that has quite the appearance of marble. Ascending two or three low steps, and taking off your shoes, you enter the first small apartment, which is floored with marble, and the walls lined with the same. In the centre is a low shaft of white marble, being the spot to which the angel rolled the stone from the tomb, and sat on it. You now stoop low to enter the narrow door that conducts you to the side of the sepulchre. The tomb is of a light brown and white marble, about six feet long and three feet high, and the same number in breadth, being joined to the wall. Between the sepulchre and the opposite wall the space is very confined, and not more than four or five persons can remain in at a time. The floor and the walls are of a beautiful marble; the apartment is a square of about seven feet, and a small dome rises over it, from which are suspended twenty-seven large silver

lamps, richly chased and of elegant workmanship,—presents from Rome, of the courts and religious orders of Europe: these are kept always burning, and cast a flood of light on the sacred tomb, and the paintings hung over it, one Romish and the other Greek, representing our Lord's ascension, and his appearance to Mary in the garden. A Greek or Romish priest always stands here with the silver vase of holy incense in his hand, which he sprinkles over the pilgrims.

Wishing to see the behaviour of these people, who come from all parts of the world, and undergo the severest difficulties to arrive at this holy spot, we remained for some time within it; and the scene was very interesting. They entered, Armenians, Greeks, and Catholics, of both sexes, with the deepest awe and veneration, and instantly fell on their knees: some, lifting their eyes to the paintings, burst into a flood of tears; others pressed their heads with fervour on the tomb, and sought to embrace it; while the sacred incense fell in showers, and was received with delight by all. It was

impossible for the looks and gestures of repentance, grief, and adoration, to be apparently more heartfelt and sincere than on this occasion. Yet other feelings were admitted by some, who took advantage of the custom of placing beads and crosses on the tomb to be sanctified by the holy incense, to place a large heap on it of these articles, which, being sprinkled and rendered inestimable, they afterwards carried to their native countries, and sold at a high price.

LETTER XIV.

JERUSALEM.

In an apartment a little on the left of the rotunda, and paved with marble, is shown the spot where Christ appeared to Mary in the garden. Near this begins the ascent to Calvary: it consists of eighteen very lofty stone steps; you then find yourself on a floor of beautifully variegated marble, in the midst of which are three or four slender white pillars of the same material, which support the roof, and separate the Greek division of the spot from that appropriated to the Catholics; these pillars are partly shrouded by rich silk hangings. At the end stand two small and elegant altars; over that of the Catholics is a painting of the crucifixion, and over the Greek is one of the

taking down the body from the cross. A number of silver lamps are constantly burning, and throw a rich and softened light over the whole of this striking scene. The street leading to Calvary has a long and gradual ascent, the elevation of the stone steps is above twenty feet, and if it is considered that the summit has been removed to make room for the sacred church, the ancient hill, though low, was sufficiently conspicuous.

The very spot where the cross was fixed is shown; it is a hole in the rock, surrounded by a silver rim; and each pilgrim prostrates himself, and kisses it with the greatest devotion. Its identity is probably as strong as that of the cross and crown of thorns found a few feet below the surface; but where is the scene around or within the city, however sacred, that is not defaced by the sad inventions of the fathers?

Having resolved to pass the night in the church, we took possession, for a few hours, of a small apartment adjoining the gallery that overlooked the crowded area beneath. As it

drew near midnight, we ascended again to the summit of Calvary. The pilgrims, one after another, had dropped off, till at last all had departed. No footstep broke on the deep silence of the scene. At intervals, from the Catholic chapel below, was heard the melody of the organ, mingled with the solemn chanting of the priests, who sang of the death and sufferings of the Redeemer. This service, pausing at times, and again rising slowly on the ear, had an effect inexpressibly fine. The hour, the stillness, the softened light and sound, above all, the belief of being where He who "so loved us" poured out his life, affected the heart and the imagination in a manner difficult to be described. Hour after hour fled fast away, and we descended to the chamber of the sepulchre. How vivid the midnight lights streamed on every part! the priest had quitted his charge, and the lately crowded scene was now lonely. This was the moment, above all others, to bend over the spot, where "the sting of death and the terrors of the grave" were taken away for ever.

Soon after daylight the pilgrims began to

return, and continued their visits till the ensuing night. The fathers lamented deeply the breaking out of the Greek revolution, and the internal war between the two Pachas, which have combined to diminish the number of pilgrims to less than one-fourth part of what it formerly was, as the journey is become too dangerous. Three or four thousand are computed to arrive every year, who afford a productive revenue to the different convents. But this is in a great measure eaten up by the heavy tax which the different orders are obliged to pay the Turks.

One day we were favoured with an audience of the Armenian patriarch. He was seated on a low divan, in an elegant apartment; and his aspect was noble and venerable. This fine old man is second only in rank to the great patriarch who resides in Persia; he said but little, and that through his interpreter; coffee and sweetmeats were handed round.

A grand procession of the three different orders took place one evening in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It was curious to observe the spirit of vanity and rivalry displayed on

this occasion. First marched the Armenians nine times slowly round the tomb, clad in the most splendid dresses; the robe and tiara of the patriarch were literally loaded with jewels. They bore a number of silk flags, of various colours, with scenes from the Scripture represented on them; and they sang as they moved along, with a consciousness that they outvied their brethren in splendour; but the abominable nasal sounds they produced did not add to its effect. The Greeks succeeded, with far less magnificence, and little better singing; but the noble and intelligent expression of countenance of their dignified ecclesiastics struck us extremely: they carried bunches of sacred flowers in their hands, which the poor pilgrims grasped at most eagerly, to carry, even when withered, to their distant homes. The fine and solemn chanting of the Franciscans, who came last, completely redeemed their dirty habits, coarse ropes, and shaven crowns.

One day as Mr. G. was walking without the city, he perceived my old fellow-traveller in Egypt, Mr. W. who had come to reclaim his

countrymen, the Jews, sitting forlorn at the gate of Bethlehem; but he sprang up with rapture as soon as he saw him, for his spirit was sad and desolate, he said, to find himself in his own fallen country, and surrounded by strangers. He was so fortunate, by means of an excellent letter of introduction, as to find a home in the Armenian convent, where he had a luxurious apartment, and the society of some intelligent fathers. He was an excellent linguist, but had been nearly starved by the monks of Antoura, a convent on Mount Lebanon, where he went to perfect himself in the Arabic, and who allowed him only a couple of eggs a day, with bread, to subsist on. He had an audience, in a few days, of the Turkish governor, who received kindly from him a Persian copy of the New Testament.

It will be found, that the Turks in general possess far more tolerance of opinion and practice than we give them credit for. I have heard many of them observe that good men of all religions will be received into Paradise: and in all the cities of their dominions are to be

found churches and convents of every Christian sect, enjoying perfect freedom of worship, and protection from insult in their rites and ceremonies. But the conduct of the Christians of Jerusalem to each other, and the bitter hatred they mutually manifest, are sufficient to give the Moslemen a contemptible opinion of Christianity. About five years ago a furious scuffle took place around the Holy Sepulchre. The time for the Catholic priest's stay in the tomb being expired, the Greek brother came to occupy his place, as they take this duty in turn. The Catholic refused to quit it, when a warm altercation ensued, and the Franciscan struck the other a violent blow on the head with the vase of holy incense. At sight of his blood flowing, the Greek cried out loudly; and the fathers of each church running in, the contest became general, and was only allayed by the superior. Even during the time of Easter, knives have been drawn and wounds given in the church, by the zealous of the different orders. It is said the Turkish guard at the entrance sometimes beat and abuse the pil-

grims; but this can only be on occasion of their noisy and riotous entrance.

I have seen well-dressed Turks looking on at the processions in the church with perfect quietness and serenity. The Armenian patriarch one day sent Mr. W. a present of a large goat and a loaf of sugar, and we found him very much at a loss what to do with the former; but as it was evident his highness, though keeping strict Lent himself and his flock, intended it to be eaten, we advised him to have it killed and dressed for dinner. The next day the goat made its appearance in soup, and in half a dozen stews and ragouts besides; and, but that the patriarch had sent some most excellent wine, it would have been difficult to get through the banquet.

One of the fathers, a middle-aged man, and interpreter to the patriarch, was already on very intimate terms with Mr. W. and high in his estimation, but he would not share in this repast in his own convent. Father Paolo Titiungi, having tried one or two paths before, had

at last become an Armenian, and was a complete specimen of a clever, worldly, and designing monk. He listened with an appearance of deep interest to the earnest discourses the stranger addressed to him, wept occasionally, saw clearly into the iniquities of his past life, till at last no one, in his own, and his new friend's opinion, could be so proper to be at the head of an Armenian establishment, to be founded in some part of Italy, and for which funds were to be raised in England. We invited him to dine with us at the convent one day with Mr. W.—A late traveller has dwelt with some admiration on the excessive strictness of the Armenian priests in Jerusalem during the time of Lent. If Father P.'s observations about his brethren are to be believed, there is a good deal of room for scepticism on the subject. It was Lent, however, and we doubted if we had any thing for our guest to eat. But Father Titiungi always refusing each offer at first, contrived to eat heartily of every dish on the table, and the wine also was

not spared; and in the cool of the evening, as we walked on the terraced roof, the good father could not refrain from singing a song.

We rode yesterday, accompanied by Antonio, the young Catholic guide, to Bethlehem, a distance of about six miles. The way led over a barren plain, for some distance, till we arrived at the monastery of St. Elias. Bethlehem soon came in view, on the brow of a rocky hill, whose sides and feet are partially covered with olive-trees. On the right, about a mile from the village, is shown the tomb of Rachel; it has all the appearance of one of those tombs erected often to the memory of a Turkish santon.

After dining very frugally at the Franciscan convent, it being Lent, we visited the church built by the Empress Helena: it is large, and supported by several rows of marble pillars, but has a very naked appearance. Leaving the church, and descending thirteen stone steps, you are in the place that was formerly the stable where the Redeemer was born. There is no violation of consistency in this, as

the stables in the East are now often formed in the same way, beneath the surface. Its present appearance is that of a grotto, as it is hewn out of the rock, the sides of which, however, are concealed by silk curtains; the roof is as Nature made it, and the floor paved with fine marble. A rich altar, where the lamps are ever burning, is erected over the place where Christ was born, and the very spot is marked by a large silver star. Directly opposite to this is another altar, to signify the place where the Virgin Mary and her child received the homage of the Magi; and over it is a painting descriptive of the event.

The second visit we paid to Bethlehem was a few days afterwards; and the monks being either absorbed in sleep, or in their devotions, as we could get no entrance to the convent, we found our way again to the grotto alone, and remained there without any intrusion. It is of small size, and not lofty; the glory, formed of marble and jasper, around the silver star, has a Latin inscription, "In this spot Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary."

A narrow passage leads to the study of St. Jerome; and not far off is shown his tomb, near to which are the tombs of St. Paula and another pious lady. Ascending again, you enter the churches of the Greek and Armenian orders, but there is nothing particular in either.

About a mile down the valley towards the wilderness, is the field where the shepherds kept watch by night, when the angels announced the birth of our Lord. Two fine and venerable trees stand in the centre, and the earth around was thickly covered with flowers. It is so sweet and romantic a spot, and so well suited to be the scene of that high event, that it would be painful to admit a doubt of its identity. At Bethlehem are sold the beautiful shells of mother of pearl, brought from the shores of the Red Sea: the surface is carved with various designs of the last supper and the crucifixion, by the inhabitants of the village; and they are purchased by the pilgrims. Small crosses also, cut out of the shells, are carved in the same way. The village contains about seven hundred inhabitants, who appear to live very meanly.

At some distance from Bethlehem, and in rather a desolate spot, are the cisterns or reservoirs formed by Solomon to supply Jerusalem with water. They are three in number, and rise up the hill over each other, so that the water flows down in a full stream from the highest, and descends from the lower one into the valley, and from thence, assisted by a small aqueduct, passes, by a course of seven miles, into the city, which it enters immediately by a subterraneous passage. These cisterns are sustained by strong buttresses, and are of various sizes, the lower one being above six hundred feet in length; they are evidently of the highest antiquity, and stand at present very much in need of repair. The spring that supplies them is not far off, and issues some feet below the ground.—From hence to Hebron is a distance of seven hours: it is a large town; and a Turkish mosque is built over the cave where Abraham and Isaac were interred; but it is scarcely possible to obtain admission into the mosque. We repented afterwards not having visited this town, the most ancient in the Land of Promise.

It was easy to perceive, in the condition of the monks, that the habit of residing constantly about the sacred places took away all their novelty; they go over the detail as heartlessly as if attending an exhibition. Father Giuseppe complained bitterly of his having been obliged to sing and pray for three months together in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, for the priests must take this duty in turn; and during the time, soon after dawn, of the celebration of high mass in the tomb of the Virgin Mary, one of the priests entered into a gay conversation, asserting that every man should be indulged with a couple of wives. The effect on them at last, perhaps, of relics, chants, and holy places, is similar to that produced on the old monk, by the sacred territory of Mount Sinai, who said that for seventy years he had seen little but precipices, sand, and sky.

We returned to Jerusalem in the evening. Having sent to the governor, for permission to visit the Dead Sea, accompanied by a guard, he refused it very civilly, but decidedly. In the present disturbed state of the country, he said,

when the Pacha of Acre's troops were besieging Naplous, only nine hours distant, and the roads were infested with stragglers from the armies, he could not be responsible for our safety; and we must wait for more peaceable days.

The places within the walls of the city, which tradition would render sacred, are innumerable. Beneath the gate of Bethlehem is shown the spot where Bathsheba was bathing when the king beheld her from the roof of his palace; and the present tower of David is built on the site of the ancient edifice. A small distance within the gate of St. Stephen that fronts Olivet, is the Pool of Bethesda: it is deep and dry, the sides and bottom overgrown with grass, and containing two or three trees. A wretched street leads from this to the governor's palace, a spacious and rather ruinous building of Roman architecture; it contains some good apartments, the windows of which command an excellent view of the mosque of Omar and its large area. In the palace, the monks point out the room where Christ was confined before his trial; and at a short distance is a dark and ruinous hall, shown

as the judgement-hall of Pilate: a little further on is the arch where the Redeemer stood, as his judge exclaimed "Behold the man!" You then proceed along the street where Christ bore his cross; in which, and in the streets leading up to Calvary, are the three places where, staggering under the weight, he fell. These are marked by three small pillars, laid flat on the ground. The very house of the rich man also is here, and the spot where Lazarus sat at his gate. Our faith had been on the wane long before we had accomplished the tour of all these places; for on what authority, save that of priesthood, can they possibly rest; since the ancient city was so completely levelled by Titus?—We were invited one evening to join a procession of the Franciscans, in a solemn visit to the sacred spots within the church of the Sepulchre. They were clad in white vestments, and carried each a long wax taper, one of which was given into our hands. The service was very impressive, and the chanting fine. At every place rendered holy by tradition, they knelt for some time, till they entered into the chapel where Helena was in-

terred, and then descended into the vault where the cross was found. The interior of the church of the Sepulchre is of great extent, as it contains, besides the sacred places, the chapels of the Franciscan, Greek, and Armenian orders. The first are losing ground before the aspiring and intriguing spirit of the two other bodies. The Greek chapel is extremely rich, but has too great a profusion of ornaments. The whole of Mount Calvary, and the lower ground about it, is inclosed within the "sacred church," and surmounted without by a large dome of a dark colour, which, from its conspicuous situation, is visible in almost every view of the city. They performed in the Catholic chapel, one morning, a disgusting and revolting ceremony. A young man was brought forth, meanly clad, and of a slender make, and a large cross being laid on his shoulders, he walked slowly round, followed by a number of people. He put on a sad countenance, and seemed to bend and faint beneath the burden of the cross; and at every pause he made, there was wailing and sobbing among the people; they at times knelt down, a monk

prayed or chanted in a mournful tone, in which they all joined; and thus the ceremony lasted for some time.

It is beautiful to turn from such scenes to others where the faith is confirmed and the imagination delighted. Such is the fountain of Siloam: it rises about half way down Mount Zion, and gushes, from beneath a little arch nearly ten feet below the surface, into a small pool, about two feet deep. This is quite open, and the rocky sides of the spot are cut smooth. On the south side a flight of steps leads down to it. The water is clear and cool, and flows down the mount into the valley beneath to a considerable distance. At this stream the women of the city generally come to wash their linen; and its banks are in some parts shaded with trees. On a pleasant spot here, a poor Turk had brought his little coffee-shed, his pipes, and bread, to refresh the passenger. Down this romantic valley, watered by the stream from Siloé, was my favourite walk; at the head of it the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat meet, and it winds be-

tween rugged and desolate hills towards the wilderness of St. Saba. It was frequented by few.

One evening I observed two poor Turks, who were returning to their homes: the hour of prayer being come, they quitted the path, and crossing the stream, knelt down side by side on its bank, in deep and silent devotion. It was infinitely striking; and if weighed in the balance with the vain processions and vile ceremonies in the ill-fated city, which would be lightest in the account?—To the north of the town, and not very far from the walls, is the magnificent cavern, called that of the prophet Jeremiah. Here, it is said, he retired to pour forth his lamentations. As far as size, gloominess, and grandeur go, it well merits its appellation: it is held in no small regard, as the key of the gate is carefully kept. No spot could have been more suitable to the utterance of the woes against the devoted city, and the mournful and impassioned feelings of the inspired prophet.

A pilgrim, however, who comes to the city,

must set no bounds to his faith, as he is shown the place where the head of Adam was found, the rock on which the martyr Stephen was stoned, and the place of the withered fig-tree; with the milk of the Virgin Mary, and some of the tears that St. Peter wept on his bitter repentance. Beneath a large spreading tree down the valley, where the soil is rather elevated, is the place where the prophet Isaiah was sawed asunder.

Among the pilgrims was a Servian and his wife, who had come a great distance from their own country to visit the Sepulchre. This poor man was so enraptured at what he saw, that he gave forty pounds, great part, no doubt, of his property, as a present to the convent.—An Armenian, a man of property, died about this time in the convent: the monks, as is the custom, took possession of all he had with him, and turned his poor servant out, without even paying him the wages due from his master. A curious instance was related to us of the uncertainty of regarding too highly many of the spots pointed out as sacred, by a gentleman whose

travels brought him to the city about this time. He had gone to the summit of Calvary; and his mind being deeply affected with the solemnity of the scene, he knelt down, where the hole of the true cross was pointed out to him, and, though no worshipper of that, yet it served to bring vividly to remembrance all that had passed around. But in the midst of his beautiful reverie and blissful feelings, he was suddenly startled by the guide Antonio clapping him on the shoulder, with "Signor, Signor, this is not the true hole; it is farther on." In an instant every solemn feeling was put to flight, and the charm irreparably broken.

LETTER XV.

JERUSALEM.

THE confined situation of the city is redeemed by the magnificent view many parts of it command of the Dead Sea, and the high mountains of Arabia Petræa, forming its eastern shore. This view is towards the south-east, over the valley, between the hills of Judgement and those adjoining Olivet.

The strong and commanding position of Mount Zion could have been the only reason for fixing the capital of Judea in so extraordinary and inconvenient a situation. Very many parts of the coast and the interior afford a far more favourable site in point of beauty and fertility, or for the purposes of commerce. The city, of old, was often subject to a scarcity of water; the

fountain of Siloam and another on the east side, with the brook Kedron, being the chief supplies without the walls; but the latter, probably, possessed little or no water during the summer heats. It was reckoned as a memorable act in one of the kings, that he made a pool and a conduit, which are still called Hezekiah, and are at the end of the eastern valley. The whole compass of the ancient city, according to Josephus, was only thirty-three furlongs, so that an extension of half a mile along the plain of Jeremiah to the north would give it its ancient size, and in a great measure, it is probable, its ancient position. The present circumference is, no doubt, correctly stated by Maundrell to be two miles and a half. Josephus distinctly states, "the old wall went southward, having its bending above the fountain Siloam," and this fountain in the side of Zion is not far without the present wall. Again the historian says, "the old wall extended northward to a great length, and passed by the sepulchral caverns of the kings," which caverns, or tombs of the kings, are now above half a mile without the walls to

the north on the plain of Jeremiah. But the small valleys which divided the interior of the old city are now filled up, and many of the elevations levelled. The whole surface of the hills on which Jerusalem and its temple stood, of which Mount Moriah cannot now be distinguished, were, no doubt, much loftier formerly, or else the hollows beneath have been partly filled up. The latter, it is very probable, has been the case. "These hills," the history observes, "are surrounded by deep valleys, and by reason of the precipices belonging to them on both sides, they are everywhere impassable." This description does not apply to the present appearance of either; no precipices, either steep or difficult, existing.

But, although the size of Jerusalem was not extensive, its very situation, on the brink of rugged hills, encircled by deep and wild valleys, bounded by eminences whose sides were covered with groves and gardens, added to its numerous towers and temple, must have given it a singular and gloomy magnificence, scarcely possessed by any other city in the world.

The most pleasing feature in the scenery around the city, is the valley of Jehoshaphat. Passing out of the gate of St. Stephen, you descend the hill to the torrent of the Kedron; a bridge leads over its dry and deep bed; it must have been a very narrow, though in winter a rapid stream. On the left is a grotto, handsomely fitted up, and called the tomb of the Virgin Mary, though it is well known she neither died nor was buried near Jerusalem. Being surprised, however, on the hills by a long and heavy shower of rain, we were glad to take shelter beneath the doorway of this grotto.

A few steps beyond the Kedron, you come to the garden of Gethsemane, of all gardens the most interesting and hallowed; but how neglected and decayed! It is surrounded by a kind of low hedge, but the soil is bare; no verdure grows on it, save six fine venerable olive-trees, which have stood here for many centuries. This spot is at the foot of Olivet, and is beautifully situated: you look up and down the romantic valley; close behind rises the mountain; before you are the walls of the devoted city.

While lingering here, at evening, and solitary, for it is not often a footstep passes by, that night of sorrow and dismay rushes on the imagination, when the Redeemer was betrayed, and forsaken by all, even by the loved disciple.—Hence the path winds up the Mount of Olives: it is a beautiful hill. The words of the Psalmist, "the mountains around Jerusalem," must not be literally applied, as none are within view, save those of Arabia. It is verdant, and covered in some parts with olive-trees. From the summit you enjoy an admirable view of the city: it is beneath, and very near; and looks, with its valleys around it, exactly like a panorama. Its noble temple of Omar, and large area planted with palms; its narrow streets, ruinous places and towers, are all laid out before you, as you have seen Naples and Corfu in Leicester-square. On the summit are the remains of a church, built by the Empress Helena; and in a small edifice, containing one large and lofty apartment, is shown the print of the last footstep of Christ, when he took his leave of earth. The Fathers should have placed it nearer to Bethany, in order

to accord with the account given us in Scripture; but it answers the purpose of drawing crowds of pilgrims to the spot. Descending Olivet to the narrow valley of Jehoshaphat, you soon come to the pillar of Absalom: it has a very antique appearance, and is a pleasing object in the valley: it is of a yellow stone, adorned with half columns, formed into three stages, and terminates in a cupola.

The tomb of Zacharias, adjoining, is square, with four or five pillars, and is cut out of the rock. Near these is a sort of grotto, hewn out of an elevated part of the rock, with four pillars in front, which is said to have been the apostles' prison at the time they were confined by the rulers. The small and wretched village of Siloa is built on the rugged sides of the hill above; and just here the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat meet, at the south-east corner of Mount Zion; they are both sprinkled with olive-trees. Over the ravine of Hinnom, and directly opposite the city, is the Mount of Judgement, or of Evil Counsel; because there, they say, the rulers took counsel against Christ,

and there the palace of Caiaphas stood. It is a broad and barren hill, without any of the picturesque beauty of Olivet, though loftier. On its side is pointed out the Aceldama, or field where Judas hung himself: a small and rude edifice stands on it, and it is used as a burying-place. But the most interesting portion of this hill, is where its rocks descend precipitously into the valley of Hinnom, and are mingled with many a straggling olive-tree. All these rocks are hewn into sepulchres of various forms and sizes; no doubt they were the tombs of the ancient Jews; and are in general cut with considerable care and skill. They are often the resting-place of the benighted passenger. Some of them open into inner apartments, and are provided with small windows or apertures cut in the rock. There is none of the darkness or sadness of the tomb; but in many, so elevated and picturesque is the situation, that a traveller may pass hours here with a book in his hand, while valley and hill are beneath and around him. Before the door of one large sepulchre stood a tree on the brink of the rock; the sun

was going down on Olivet on the right, and the resting-place of the dead commanded a sweeter scene than any of the abodes of the living. Many of the tombs have flights of steps leading up to them. It was in one of these that a celebrated traveller would fix the site of the holy sepulchre. It is certainly more picturesque, but why more just, is hard to conceive; since the words of Scripture do not allow the identity of the sacred tomb to any particular spot, and tradition on so memorable an occasion could hardly err. The Fathers declare, that it long since became absolutely necessary to cover the native rock with marble, in order to prevent the pilgrims from destroying it, in their zeal to carry off pieces to their homes; and on this point their relation may, one would suppose, be believed.

The valley of Hinnom now turns to the west of the city, and extends rather beyond the north wall: here the plain of Jeremiah commences, and is the best wooded tract in the whole neighbourhood. In this direction, but farther on, the historian of the siege speaks "of a tower,

that afforded a prospect of Arabia at sun-rising, and of the utmost limits of the Hebrew possessions at the sea westward." The former is still enjoyed from the city; but the latter could only be had at a much greater distance north, where there is no hill in front. Above half a mile from the wall, are the tombs of the Kings. In the midst of a hollow, rocky and adorned with a few trees, is the entrance; you then find a large apartment, above fifty feet long, at the side of which a low door (surmounted by a beautiful frieze) leads into a series of small chambers, in the walls of which are several deep recesses, hewn out of the rock, of the size of the human body. There are six or seven of these low and dark apartments, one or two of which are adorned with vine-leaves and clusters of grapes. Many parts of the stone coffins, beautifully ornamented in the Saracenic manner, are strewed on the floor; and it should seem that some hand of ravage had broken them to pieces, with the view of finding something valuable within. The sepulchres of the Judges, so called, are situated in a wild spot about two miles from the city. They

bear much resemblance to those of the Kings, but are not so handsome or spacious.

Returning to the foot of the Mount of Olives, you proceed up the vale of Jehoshaphat on a line with the plain; it widens as you advance, and is more thickly sprinkled with olives. When arrived at the hill at which it terminates, the appearance of the city and its environs is rich and magnificent; and you cannot help thinking, were an English party suddenly transported here, they would not believe it was the sad and dreary Jerusalem they were gazing on. This is the finest point to view it from, for its numerous minarets and superb mosque are seen to great advantage over the trees of the plain and valley, and the foreground is verdant and cultivated. One or two houses of the Turks stood in this spot; and we had trespassed on the rude garden of one of them, where the shade of a spreading tree invited us to linger over the prospect. For some days there had been heavy falls of rain, yet the bed of the Kedron was still dry, and has been so, most probably, for many centuries. The climate of

the city and country is in general very healthy. The elevated position of the former, and the numerous hills which cover the greater part of Palestine, must conduce greatly to the purity of the air. One seldom sees a country overrun with hills in the manner this is; in general they are not in ranges, but more or less isolated, and of a picturesque form. Few of them approach to the character of mountains, save Carmel, the Quarantina, the shores of the lakes, and those which bound the valley of the Jordan. To account for the existence of so large a population in the promised lands, the numerous hills must have been entirely cultivated; at present their appearance on the sides and summits is, for the most part, bare and rocky. In old time, they were probably formed into terraces, as is now seen on the few cultivated ones, where the vine, olive, and fig-tree flourish.

On a delightful evening we rode to the Wilderness of St. John. The monastery of that name stands at the entrance; it is a good and spacious building, and its terrace enjoys a fine prospect, in which is the lofty hill of Modin,

with the ruins of the palace of the Maccabees on its summit. A small village adjoins the convent, in which are shown the remains of the house of Elizabeth, where the meeting with Mary took place. But few monks reside in the convent, which affords excellent accommodations for a traveller. A German pilgrim had found his way here, a respectable, dull kind of man. One can fancy Greeks and Italians seeking with ardour the sacred land; but a heavy German with a pipe in his mouth, travelling about the desert of St. John and the valley of Elah, is rather odd.

Having supped, and the air being chill, a vessel filled with charcoal was brought, and, having taken the usual last resource of a pipe and coffee, I lay down to rest in the small cell. But I had very nearly found my tomb in that wilderness; for one of the monks placed a quantity of fresh charcoal on the fire, during my sleep, and, closing the door of the little cell after him, there was hardly a possibility of escaping destruction. In about two or three hours, I awoke in a state of utter weakness and

agony of mind, caused by the suffocating effects of the vapour, which had long filled the apartment. It was impossible to rise from the bed; and all consciousness being soon lost, my travels would have terminated, had not Michel happened to be awake in bed, with his candle burning, in the adjoining cell. On hearing some faint cries, he instantly ran in, and, carrying me into the air, brought life back again by dashing torrents of cold water over me. Lives are frequently lost, in the East, from the same cause. In the convent cells, above all places, if the fathers wished to have a rich devotee out of the way, they have only to put a pan of fresh charcoal beside him at night.—In the church, a rich altar is erected on the spot where St. John was born, with an inscription over it.

The next morning we visited the Wilderness: it is narrow, partially cultivated, and sprinkled with trees; the hills rise rather steep on each side; from that on the right, a small stream flows into the ravine below. The whole appearance of the place is romantic: and the prophet might have resided here, while exercising

his ministry, with very little hardship. The neighbourhood still, no doubt, produces excellent honey, which is to be had throughout Palestine. High up the rocky side of the hill on the left, amidst a profusion of trees, is the cave or grotto of St. John. A fountain gushes out close by. When we talk of wildernesses, mountains, and plains in Palestine, it is to be understood that they seldom answer to the size of the same objects in more extensive countries; that they sometimes present but a beautiful miniature of them. It certainly deserved the term given by the Psalmist to the city, of being a "compact" country. The Baptist in his wild garb, surrounded by an assemblage of various characters, warning them to repentance in this wild spot, must have presented a fine subject for the painter. In wandering over the country, we feel persuaded that its very scenery lent wings to the poetical and figurative discourses of its prophets and seers. Sublime and diversified, it is yet so confined and minute as to admit the deepest seclusion in the midst of a numerous population.

The monks in the convent are of the Catholic order, and have the advantage of all their brethren in point of situation and comfort; and yet nothing will induce these Franciscans to keep their habitations clean; the Greek and Armenian monasteries are palaces compared to them. The fathers are in general a very ignorant race of men, chiefly from the lowest orders of society. Their tables, except during Lent, are spread plentifully twice a day with several dishes of meat and wine; and so well do many of them thrive, that they would consider it banishment to be sent home to Europe to their friends. From the east end of the wilderness, you enter the famous valley of Elah, where Goliah was slain by the champion of Israel. It is a pretty and interesting-looking spot; the bottom covered with olive-trees. Its present appearance answers exactly to the description given in Scripture; the two hills on which the armies stood, entirely confining it on the right and left. The valley is not above half a mile broad. Tradition was not required to identify this spot; Nature has stamped it with ever-

lasting features of truth. The brook still flows through it in a winding course, from which David took the smooth stones; the hills are not precipitous, but slope gradually down; the vale is varied with banks and undulations, and not a single habitation is visible in it. From the scenes of some of the battles and positions of armies in those times, it is difficult to account for the mighty numbers stated as having fought; where could they be drawn up? The numerous kings of the Canaanites, and other people, who dwelt in the mountains, the hills, and towns, and fought against Israel, answered, probably, in power and force, to the great sheiks of the Arabs of the present day, who dwell in and around Hebron, and to the south of it, and in the plains and mountains of Syria. The rich and beautiful plain of Esdralon, is the most spacious area in the country, and was the theatre of some battles; and the plain of Jericho is next in extent; but when we read that many hundreds of thousands of men fought around Mount Ephraim, and other scenes in this country, one is tempted to wonder, how the

confined valleys and open places one traverses, could have contained them. The numbers given, as some commentators observe, must have been enormously enlarged in transcribing, or translating from the original. If such multitudes were gathered together, hills, vales, and streams would disappear beneath their feet, and who would be left to bury the hundreds of thousands of the slain? The hosts of the Midianites or Arabs might truly be termed "as the sands on the sea shore," as an Arab camp with its camels, tents, and horses, looks ten times as numerous as it really is; but the armies of Judea were all infantry, and villages, cottages, and towns must have been drawn into the vortex of battle, from the astonishing population of all parts of the land. It may be said, that their engagements were disorderly and without union, like those of other eastern nations; and being mostly undisciplined armies, called out *en masse* from their labours and avocations, this was probably the case; but the most close, deadly, and sustained combat, can only account for the tremendous slaughter.

On the same evening, we left St. John's, and returned to the city. One morning we had an audience of the Governor: the apartments of the palace we entered, were not handsomely furnished. How inviting the area of the temple, with its palm-trees, looked!—it was just beneath the palace windows; women often walk there, and it meets the eye from every eminence, as if to tantalize the unfortunate Christians, to whom it is forbidden. While we were with the governor, an elderly well-dressed Jew entered, and prostrated himself before the chief, touching the earth with his forehead, and presented him with a gold-flowered vase full of a rich sweetmeat, which his excellency commanded to be given to us to make use of. It was rather a degrading scene for the Jew.—A loud noise being heard without, four or five soldiers entered, dragging in another, who was a Nubian, and had behaved ill and struggled violently. They held him by the arms and legs, while the governor seizing a kind of baton, with a knob of lead at the end of it, struck him eight or ten violent blows on the body, avoiding, however,

the vital parts: the poor fellow cried out *amaun* in good earnest. It was not a very creditable exhibition. This governor is subject to the Pacha of Damascus. Scattered bodies of soldiers were arriving to join in the war; and we had met a solitary Arab occasionally on horseback, with an immense lance, on his way to the city. At the south-east of Zion, in the vale of Jehoshaphat, they say the gardens of Solomon stood, and also on the sides of the hill adjoining that of Olivet. It was not a bad, though rather a confined site for them; the valley here is covered with a rich verdure, divided by hedges into a number of small gardens. A mean-looking village stands on the rocky side of the hill above. Not a single palm-tree is to be seen in the whole territory around, where once every eminence was covered with them. The roads leading to the city are bad, except to the north, being the route to Damascus; but the supplies of wood and other articles for building the temple, must have come by another way than the near and direct one from Jaffa, which is impassable for burdens of a large size, from

the defiles and rocks amidst which it is carried; the circuitous routes by land from Tyre or Acre were probably used. The Turk who is chief of the guard that keeps watch at the entrance of the sacred church, waited on us two or three times; he is a very fine and dignified-looking man, and insured us entrance at all hours: which permission we availed ourselves of, to pass another night amidst its hallowed scenes, with interest and pleasure but little diminished.

We chose a delightful morning for a walk to Bethany. The path leads up the side of Olivet, by the very way which our Saviour is said to have descended in his last entry into Jerusalem. At a short distance are the ruins of the village of Bethphage; and half a mile further is Bethany. The distance is about two miles from the city. The village is beautifully situated; and the ruins of the house of Lazarus are still shown, and do credit to the good fathers' taste.

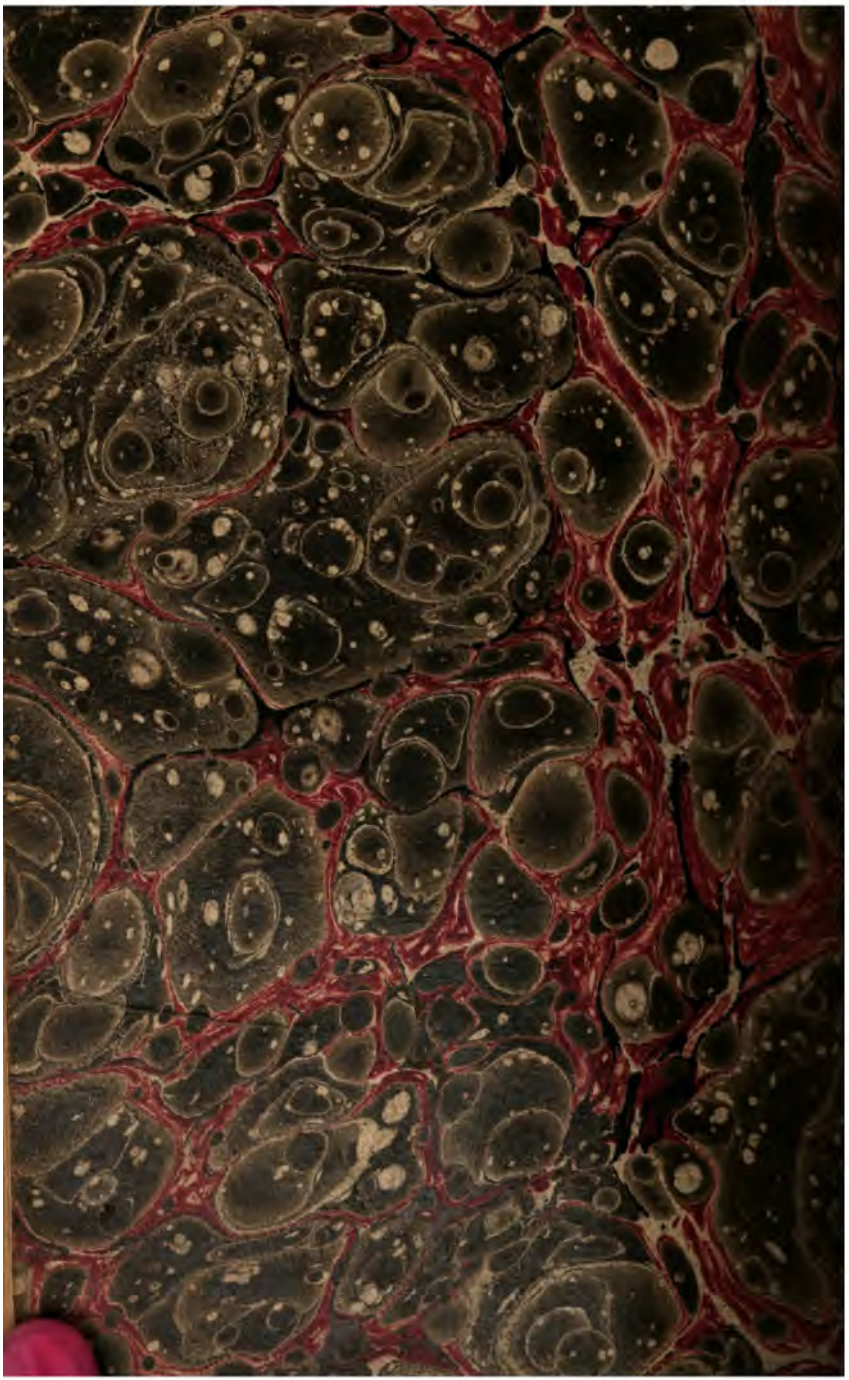
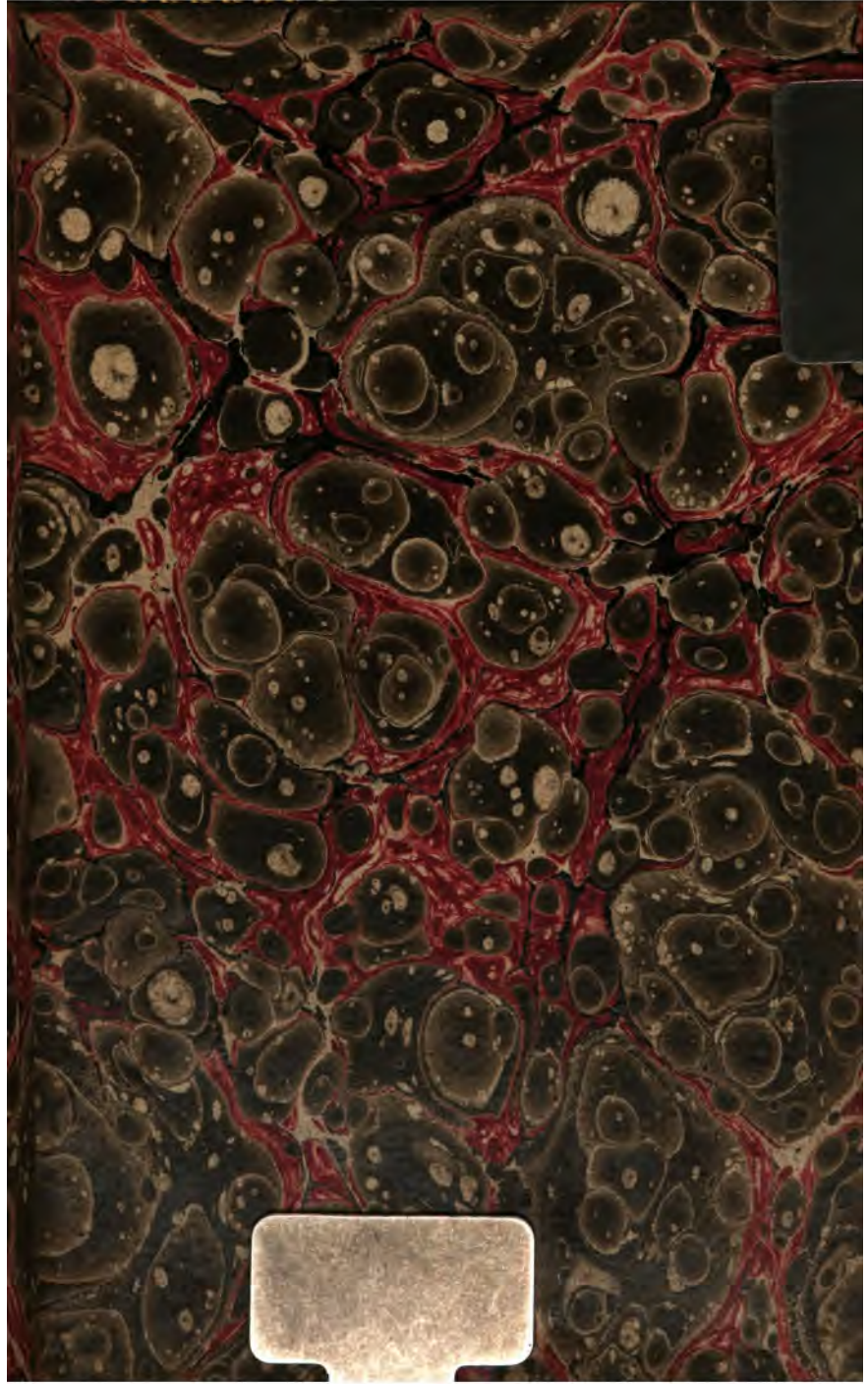
On the right of the road is the tomb of Lazarus, cut out of the rock. Carrying candles,

we descended ten or twelve stone steps to the bottom of the cave. In the middle of the floor is the tomb, a few feet deep, and large enough to admit one body only. Several persons can stand conveniently in the cave around the tomb, so that Lazarus, when restored, did not, as some suppose, descend from a sepulchre cut out of the wall, but rose out of the grave, hewn in the floor of the grotto. The light that enters from above, does not find its way to the bottom: the fine painting in the Louvre of this resurrection was probably faithful in representing it by torch-light. Its identity cannot be doubted; the position of Bethany could never have been forgotten, and this is the only sepulchre in the whole neighbourhood. It is a delightful Sunday afternoon's walk to Bethany. After crossing the Mounts, the path passes along the side of a hill, that looks down into a wild and long valley, in which are a few scattered cottages. The view just above the village is very magnificent, as it embraces the Dead Sea, the valley and river of the Jordan, and its *embouchure* into the lake.

On the descent of Olivet, is shown the spot where Christ wept over Jerusalem: tradition could not have selected a more suitable spot. Up this ascent David went, when he fled from Absalom, weeping. And did a Jew wish to breathe his last where the glory of his land and fallen city should meet his departing gaze, he would desire to be laid on the summit of the Mount of Olives.

The condition of the Jews in Palestine is more insecure and exposed to insult and exaction than in Egypt and Syria, from the frequent lawless and oppressive conduct of the governors and chiefs. These distant Pachalics are less under the control of the Porte; and in Egypt, the subjects of Mahmoud enjoy a more equitable and quiet government than in any other part of the empire. There is little national feeling or enthusiasm among them; though there are some exceptions, where these exist in an intense degree. In the city they appear fearful and humbled, for the contempt in which they are held by the Turks is excessive, and they often go poorly clad to avoid exciting suspicion. Yet it

is an interesting sight to meet with a Jew wandering with his staff in his hand, and a venerable beard sweeping his bosom, in the rich and silent plain of Jericho, on the sides of his native mountains, or on the banks of the ancient river Kishon, where the arm of the mighty was withered in the battle of the Lord. Did a spark of the love of this country warm his heart, his feelings must be exquisite: but his spirit is suited to his condition.

END OF VOL. I.

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